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Dangerous Positions: Anti-Episcopal Martyrology and the Fashioning of Pietistic Protest in England, c.1520-1560

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of

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Abstract

This thesis looks at a group of texts, that it has identified as English Protestant anti-episcopal martyrologies, in their social context. It examines the dialogue in print and manuscript between Protestant reformers in Tudor England and the bishops who opposed them. I argue that an analysis of the polemical texts which contributed to this dialogue demonstrates the strongly anti-episcopal stance adopted by English Protestants from the early sixteenth century to the accession of Elizabeth I. The texts I probe have been little studied either by historians or literary critics, and this has resulted in their literary discourses, as well as their importance as contributions to the development of the English Reformation, being overlooked. The reason for this neglect is that commentators have failed to identify the way in which they limned Protestant martyrological stances for their characters. Furthermore the context common to all these texts - a systematic opposition to the judicial, economic and political powers of the bishops in England, which was being carefully developed by Protestant propagandists from as early as 1520 - has not previously been discussed.

The thesis makes equal use of historical and literary sources in order to make sense of otherwise oblique references and rhetorical techniques in both well-known and more obscure pieces of Protestant doctrinal writing and ecclesiastical satire produced between 1520 and 1560. By paying attention to episcopal archives and modern research on English bishops of the sixteenth century, the thesis identifies the fundamental importance of English episcopal administration for Henrician, Edwardian, and Marian ecclesiology. It shows that the Tudor ecclesiastical polity created a culture that fostered a martyrological consciousness, which was ultimately the only form of justification for opponents of the established church. Such a consciousness was exploited by anti-episcopal apologists for propaganda purposes.

My study identifies the formation of this martyrological consciousness by early writers such as William Tyndale, William Barlow and George Joye, whose writing has hitherto not been discussed in such terms. It then looks at the way in which this early martyrological writing was tailored into more specialised anti-episcopal martyrology, such as those pieces which satirised episcopal visitation and examination or those which analysed the significance of last wills and testaments in the context of an episcopal administration.

From this the thesis concludes that anti-episcopal martyrology heavily informed the thinking behind the later debates over the social and political position of the church within the state, such as in the Admonition Crisis of the 1570s and the Marprelate Controversy of the late 1580s and early 1590s. There is also strong evidence to suggest that, rather ironically, the literary creation of a Protestant martyrological posture made between 1520 and 1560 was adopted by Catholic apologists in the 1570s and 1580s in their confrontation with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Elizabethan Settlement. It also argues that further work should be done on the borrowing of notions of martyrology from the early propagandists by later more well-known authors such as John Foxe, Edmund Spenser, John Milton and John Bunyan.

I have consulted collections of MSS and early printed sources in The British Library, Cambridge University libraries, Lambeth Palace Library, Dr Williams' Library and Winchester Cathedral library.

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Preface

This is not a conventional study for a University School of English. It by no means concentrates on canonical literary artifacts nor does literary stylistics predominate in the discussion. I look at literary devices used in anti-episcopal Protestant reform propaganda, and therefore each of the pieces as a whole is not literature in the conventional sense. But my study does identify a powerful form of writing that in itself betrays a great deal about the contemporary intellectual culture in which it was produced, as well as showing how better known canonical pieces may have been influenced by that culture and drawn upon the techniques of this writing.

Like Dante in his massive dream allegory, *La Commedia*, one morning - about a year into this thesis - I awoke to find myself in a dark wood. The way through this wild crowded forest of books was not clearly marked and, unlike 'Dante the Pilgrim', I had no street-wise Virgil to lead me through. I did, however, have the support of a number of people, who helped me gradually beat a logical path out into the dawn of a clear, bright new day. Thanks are therefore due to my supervisor, Lorna Hutson, for her advice, encouragement and continued understanding of my work as it went through its various drafts. I would also like to thank: Professor Lisa Jardine and the generosity of the School of English and Drama at Queen Mary and Westfield College, without whose Drapers' Scholarship, I doubt this thesis would have reached this stage; Professor Patrick Collinson for reading an early draft of my work and for allowing me to consult an unpublished draft of his own; Dr Warren Boutcher for standing in and offering apposite criticism during the last year; the library staff at the British Museum, Dr Williams Library and Cambridge University Library, and the curator of Winchester Cathedral Library, all of whose expertise has greatly assisted the often slow process of research; and Mr Steve Barnett who has continually helped and encouraged me with my ideas and writing. I am also indebted to my mother and grandmother, without whose presence ... I would surely have lost my way.

Introduction.

Introduction

The city chronicler Charles Wriothesley made a telling entry for July 1546 in his record of events in the city of London. He noted:

> The seventh daie of Julie [1546] was proclamation made in the cittie of London with a trompett and an harold-at-arms, with the sergeant-at-armes of the cittie and one of the clarkes of the Papers, for certaine Englishe bookes which contain pernitious and detestable errors and heresies to be brought in by the last daie of August next coming, the names be theise: the text of the New Testament of Tindales or Coverdales translation: the bookes of Frith, Tindalle, Wyckliffe, Joy, Roy, Basiley [pseud.], Barnes, Coverdale, Tourner, and Tracye, which bookes after the bringinge unto the mayor or bishopp shal be brent, as further by the said proclamation doeth appeare.[1]

With the exception of William Tracy and William Turner ('Tourner'), all the authors named here spent long periods in forced exile from English authorities and many suffered at the stake under accusations of heresy.[2] William Roy was burnt by the Portuguese Inquisition while journeying along the coast some time after 1529, John Frith was executed in England in 1533, William Tyndale was strangled and burnt at Vilvoorde Castle in 1536, Robert Barnes was burnt at Smithfield in 1540, John Wyclif's remains were exhumed and burnt as those of a heretic in 1428 by order of the Council of Constance, and William Tracy (d.1530), a Lutheran Gloucestershire magistrate during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII, was posthumously condemned and burnt as a heretic by Convocation in 1532 because of the views he had expressed in his will. George Joye, Miles Coverdale and Thomas Becon (a.k.a. Theodore Basille, 'Basiley') spent many years smuggling reform propaganda into England from the reformed German cities where they were sheltering from the jurisdiction of the English Counter-Reformation.

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1 [Charles Wriothesley], *A Chronicle of England during the reigns of the tudors, from A.D. 1485 - 1559*, ed. by William Douglas Hamilton, 2 vols. (London: Camden Society, 1875), I, p.168-9. The attribution of this diary to Wriothesley is made upon internal evidence.

2 See M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1939).

Why were these writers so dangerous to the authorities? What was it that they were doing that made their suppression necessary, apparently, at all costs? Being made in 1546, this proclamation came when Henrician reaction against Protestant reform in the English church was at its height. The books listed here are all significant because their narratives reveal that a set of discursive practices had been created to simultaneously undermine English conservative episcopal jurisdiction and create a defense of Protestant doctrine and church government. Their concentration on subverting the ideology of the English Tudor system of episcopal church government is marked. I shall examine the way in which these discursive practices were created by these authors from the late 1520s, and suggest how my findings raise questions, firstly, about the lack of literary critical attention to the books of these writers in particular, and secondly, about recent scholarship on sixteenth century Protestant martyrology.

This thesis, then, is an interdisciplinary study of a certain type of Protestant writing and its intervention in the English Reformation from c.1520-1558. It examines, at both court and parish level, the notion and office of episcopacy during this period, and how poetic meaning was given to printed reformist attacks on the continuance of episcopal power and activities.[3] The

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[3] Major studies on the Tudor episcopate are: Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England*, 3 vols (London: Hollis and Carter, 1950-4); Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Tudor Prelates and Politics, 1536-1558* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953); A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London: Batsford, 1964); Rosemary O'Day and Felicity Heal (eds.), *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church in England, 1500-1642* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1976); Ralph Houlbrooke, 'The Protestant Episcopate, 1547-1603: The Pastoral Contribution', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. by F. Heal and R. O'Day (London: Macmillan, 1977); Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: the Struggle for a Reformed Church* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979); Felicity Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: A Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). For more recent work on the sixteenth-century English bishops see: Barrett L. Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England', *Albion*, 23:2 (Summer, 1991), 231-252; R. N. Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in Later Medieval England: the Evidence for the Diociese of Coventry and Lichfield', *Midland History*, 13 (1988), 1-20, and 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in the Diocese of Exeter in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:4 (Oct., 1988), 520-530; and Thomas F. Mayer, 'If Martyrs are to be Exchanged with Martyrs: The Kidnappings of William Tyndale and Reginald Pole',

continued position of the English bishops as temporal lords and governmental officers throughout this period of ecclesiastical and state reform was an anathema to the whole ethos of the European Reformation. Consequently in England the episcopal office became the site around which a central struggle for ecclesiastical authority was played out during a period of revolutionary change. Some historical accounts of the English Reformation - with an anglo-catholic or 'Catholic and Reformed' bias - have played down the extent to which the English church was reformed in the sixteenth century. Others that deal with the Reformation period suggest that Reformation polemic was limited and altogether insignificant (contrary to the claims of Reformation historians) in comparison to other aspects of sixteenth-century culture and society. In 'Parnassus Restored, Saints confounded: The Secular Challenge to the Age of the Godly, 1560-1660',[4] C. H. George argues that, in the period leading up to the Civil Wars, 'vulgar' interest in issues of religion was minor. The fomentation of ideas occasioned by secular and classical influences, argues George, had a greater effect upon the political situation than any popular inculcation of puritan or protestant intellectual capital. While it is important to be aware that dominant versions of history reconstructed from extant sources could be misleading, I would disagree that the influence of the temporalty was an unimportant factor in Reformation polemic. In his writing Diarmaid MacCulloch consistently adopts an anglo-catholic position. He claims that, even as late as the reign of Elizabeth, church leaders were unable to implement ecclesiastical reform in line with Calvinistic theology: this not only plays down the importance of the English

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Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, 81 (1990), 286-308, which looks at the role of Cuthbert Tunstall and John Stokesley in the attempted assassination and kidnapping of Willian Tyndale. This thesis draws on the statistical evidence of these later studies but incorporates this within a new historiographical position as laid out below.

4 In *Albion*, 23:3 (Fall, 1991), pp.56-72.

Reformation, but denies that it ever happened at all. However, Patrick Collinson, in 'The English Reformation 1945-1955'[5] clearly states that the 'English Reformation was a drastic *caesura,* the greatest of all disjunctions in the history of a nation which has lived by a virtuous myth of continuity'.[6] As Collinson points out, the relative significance of religious change in the sixteenth century is an historiographical minefield as crucial to modern politics as the altercation over 'causes' of the English Civil War. The main questions at issue are the relation of religious issues to political and socio-economic ones in the sixteenth century and the extent of change that was made in the name of either the former or the latter. I adopt the position that the religious issues in this period created for England a serious revolutionary situation.[7]

The books, pamphlets, treatises, polemical broadsheets and other printed writings I examine reveal the evolution of a powerful anti-episcopal lobby. The responses to such texts by the bishops were made through the ecclesiastical judicial machinery that they controlled, and they show an extreme concern, in the face of other reformations in Europe, that only the maintenance of an episcopal ecclesiastical polity would ensure the maintenance of the Tudor political and social hierarchy.

The methodological apparatus employed to argue my thesis is strategically poised between two main areas of study. Firstly, I examine the

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5 Unpublished paper - I am very grateful to Professor Collinson for sending me a copy of this.

6 Collinson, 'The English Reformation', p.1.

7 As an example of the anglo-catholic theory see: Diarmaid MacCulloch's position in 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *History Today*, 41 (July 1991), 28-35, 'Catholic and Puritan in Elizabethan Suffolk: A County Community Polarizes', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 72 (1981) 232-289, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County, 1500-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 'Kett's Rebellion in Context', *Past and Present,* 84 (1979), 36-59, and Julian Cornwall and Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Debate on *Kett's Rebellion in Context*', *Past and Present,* 93 (1981), 160-173. For other examples of a historiography that suggests the English church became a reformed Catholic organization after the sixteenth century and not a radically different institution from its late-medieval predecessor see: C. W. Dugmore, *The Mass and the English Reformers* (London: Macmillan, 1958); and Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: the Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

history, position, political function and activities of bishops during the English Reformation both as functionaries at court and in the government of England and as central figures in the process of ecclesiastical change in this period. Secondly, I scrutinise the activities of early reformers, bringing together a number of texts that were all shaped and deployed as part of the Protestant subversion of conservative episcopal ideology. This methodology reveals that there is a certain bond between literary culture and the ideology and practice of the policing of the English Reformation by the Tudor episcopal courts. My interdisciplinary methodology reveals how historical conditions can be discerned in these texts, embedded in them as sophisticated details of their structure and narrative. The texts come from diverse political contexts and are written by authors from a variety of subtly different denominational and political positions, but all share the single theme of concern - in one form or another - about government of the English church by bishops. This concern with episcopal rule and activity has not previously been explicitly identified as a common feature of the books that I bring together here. In discussions of the English Reformation denominational allegiances are not just about piety but often about politics too. Recent scholarship has at last recognized that the often-asked question of whether the motive for significant events in the Reformation was pietistic or political - such as in historico-biographical studies of Thomas More, Lady Jane Grey or Henry VIII's divorce issue - is essentially a *question mal posée.* Politics and religion were so tightly and complexly interwoven in this period that it is anachronistic to disconnect them.

I show how texts by writers such as George Joye, William Barlow, William Tyndale, Robert Barnes, William Roy, Simon Fish, William Turner and

John Bale use *Protestant martyrology* to create a body of literature that seriously undermined the Tudor episcopal office. Upon first approaching these texts, it would appear that they were unequivocal, even rather arid, monologues about the celebration of the Mass, Purgatory, priestly authority, justification by faith and other religious issues. This offers one possible explanation why attention to them has previously been largely confined to the province of the ecclesiastical historian, and why until now literary criticism has ruthlessly dehistoricised them. But a closer scrutiny of the register and idiom of these texts as a group suggests that a certain textual encoding, presumably understandable to contemporary readers, was common to all of them. Identifying and interpreting this encoding process reveals that each of these texts was designed to take part in the sustained denunciation of unreformed Tudor episcopacy during the Reformation. The code always included an embedded anagogical narrative and a notion of the Protestant martyrological posture.

The literary critical position on most of the texts and authors I examine has, *at best,* confined them to the margins of the literary canon, inferior to 'great' writers of the sixteenth century for various reasons of style and subject. Two studies in this tradition are Charles C. Butterworth and Allan G. Chester's, *George Joye 1495?-1553 A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), and William A. Clebsch's, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535,* Yale Publications in Religion 11 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964). The former reviews Joye's writing as among the lesser peaks in a landscape of 'mountain ranges' populated by great men of letters, and uses Joye's *Letters* of

1529[8] only as a means to reconstruct a biography of its author. But the texts I probe, like all language, were social acts:[9] they were part of a network of discourses, practices and, in this case, conflicts that cannot be ignored. While this network is a complex one to trace - it is not crudely reflected in the texts' surfaces - the burden of negotiating a route to it should not be abrogated. It is the collaboration of the historian and the literary critic that can most effectively facilitate this task. Thus, rather than assessing Joye's *Letters* as worthless polemic, in my Chapter on examination I show how this book was instrumental in contributing to a carefully fashioned type of Protestant martyrological writing (a type of writing that I explain was designed to intervene in and oppose episcopal examintation).

While Clebsch's book links the writings of Tyndale, Frith, Barlow, Barnes, Joye and others to a more convincing historical narrative and Protestant theology than that of Butterworth and Chester, it continues to see them as material only for the service of biography. It still offers no comment on the way in which these texts shaped martyrological demeanours out of episcopally proscribed victims. Neither of these studies identifies the anti-episcopal and martyrological discursive practices in this early writing that were designed to combat unreformed Tudor episcopacy, subvert the juridical machinery by which it maintained its power, and celebrate Protestant piety. It was only the anagogical construction of a martyrological carriage, playing on the popular imagination, that could serve such a purpose, and I will show how episcopally anathematised Protestants achieved such a bearing in the texts

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[8] George Joye, *The Letters which Johan Ashwel Priour of Newnham Abbey beside Bedforde sente secretely to the Bishope of Lyncolne* ... (Strasbourg, 1529).

[9] See V. N. Vološinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), esp. cap. 3.

concerned. This demonstrates that these texts were part of a social act, and, in so doing, recovers their cultural significance.

The texts I examine may not, strictly speaking, constitute a genre, but they are certainly all of a type - a type that has not yet been identified. Although these texts may at first seem diverse, they share the common theme of being part of the English Reformation's debate on episcopacy - an issue absolutely central to Tudor structures of power and social structures throughout the country in sixteenth-century England. The importance of religion to social structure has already been identified by Keith Thomas in his *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin, 1971). This book substantively adopts the view that late-medieval Catholicism was functionalist in that the doctrine it taught and ritual it practised were part of a world view necessary to cope with living in the early modern period.[10] If religion was only fractionally as important to everyday life and social cohesion as some of these studies suggest, the introduction of Protestant ecclesiastical reform in England during this period would have made an impact on all areas of society from the day labourer to the privy councillor.[11] That is to say, in a society considered to be theist, alterations in liturgy and biblical interpretation would not only have been highly visible but would have struck deep (radically) and, in many cases, hard. Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic* acted as midwife to the birth of fruitful

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[10] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin, 1971). For a critical reassessment of this functionalist view see, for example: Hildred Geertz, 'An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6 (1975), 71-89; Keith Thomas, 'An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6 (1975), 91-109 (for Thomas's own partial repudiation of the efficacy of functionalist historiography for the sixteenth century); and Margaret Spufford, 'Puritanism and Social Control?', in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, ed. by Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp.41-57.

[11] For specific local studies that address this issue see, for example: Margaret Aston, 'Iconoclasm at Rickmansworth, 1522: Troubles of Churchwardens', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40:4 (1989), 524-552; David Harris Sacks, The Demise of the Martyrs: the Feasts of St. Clement and St. Katherine in Bristol 1400-1600', *Social History*, 11:2 (1986), 141-169; Clive Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service: Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36:1 (1985), 46-65.

revisions of the belief in sixteenth-century religion as functionalist. But, despite these important qualifications to a purely mechanistic approach, the findings of this debate do tend to suggest that, at the local level, religious continuity was by no means in place, and that the ecclesiastical reforms of the period highlighted and created serious inherent social tensions. Because the texts that I examine lay at the heart of this socially pervasive controversy, they aimed at refashioning popular piety at the same time as they denigrated the episcopal office. Their narratives reveal a concern for the spiritual health of every lay parishioner as well as issuing detailed criticisms of well-known bishops and courtiers. From their own experiences, early reformers limned a whole range of episcopal practices in martyrological texts that denigrated the office of bishop at the same time as (and *by which*) they set out to encourage a popular piety favourable towards a Protestant ecclesiastical polity.

Many of the texts I look at contributed to partisan Protestant histories of the English church and the Reformation. This happened because they were used as source material by subsequent historians and biographers, but also because the literary techniques they developed were particularly well suited to Protestant historiography. It is for this reason that the Reformation and its historiography are so important in understanding the way in which these texts functioned socially and politically, and the possible reasons that their literary qualities, hitherto, have been missed. A brief look at the course of Reformation historiography must therefore prefix my historical introduction to relevant aspects of the English Reformation. In the latter I will show why, under Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, the issue of episcopacy was so central to the course of the Reformation and to the production of the texts I treat.

History, histories and the sixteenth century: What is the 'English Reformation'?

For the twentieth-century scholar there are many 'Reformations': there is that of G. R. Elton or of A. G. Dickens or of Christopher Haigh or of J. J. Scarisbrick to name but a few examples. But what about the authors (the scholars), and their texts, that I look at here? They were dealing with the possibility of reforming, of refashioning Catholic dogma in England according to a piety based on extensive research of the Bible. For them the issue was 'reformation' not 'The Reformation'. As far as is possible, considering the inheritance of post-reformation scholarship, I would like to retain this idea of reformation (with a small 'r'), because it is essential to understanding how and why the texts that I treat here functioned in the way that they did. In a sense, the modern scholar is faced with the same difficulties that presented themselves to the authors of the texts scrutinised here. The latter were confronted, first, with the task of discovering, of uncovering, what they believed to be the church established by Christ and catalogued in the Bible and, second, with depicting the Catholic Church as a distortion of this. The modern scholar, in a similar way, must also attempt to locate the palimpsest reformation beyond the writing that has effaced it. I believe that my inquiry here into a particular form of anti-episcopal writing marks a part of such a quest.

In the theoretical preamble that lays out the main critical methodology used in his article 'Reading *Piers Plowman*: Literature, History and Criticism',[12] David Aers argues that William Langland's alliterative verse poem *Piers Plowman*:

> is now one of the major texts studied in courses on Middle English Literature in Anglo-American universities, courses that have the distinction of being the most

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12 David Aers, 'Reading *Piers Plowman*: Literature, History and Criticism', *Literature and History*, Second Series 1:1 (Spring, 1990), 4-23.

> ideologically conservative and the most resistant to critical self-reflection in the teaching of literature over the last thirty five years.[13]

As a result of this, observes Aers, Langland's dream vision 'has become a poem habitually read as representative of Catholic orthodoxy'.[14] This is a reading with which Aers takes issue in the subsequent pages of his article, but not with a critical methodology, he says, that follows 'fashionable forms of poststructuralism, whether in the "New Historicist" and neo-Foucaultian or more committedly deconstructionist forms'.[15] Aers, on the contrary, advocates what he describes as 'a literary criticism which gives serious attention to those historical studies which have been addressing the specificities of economic, political, ideological and military practices in late medieval communities'.[16] 'Critics who are not content with a display of their own sophistication and preoccupations in the current competitive academic market', argues Aers as a justification for this historical methodology,

> will always attempt to formulate the questions and struggles past people addressed, in their living and, where they did this, in their writing. That historical inquiry which seeks to discover the specific forms of life in past communities is an inescapable part of such literary criticism.[17]

Similarly, in its critical approach, this thesis draws on the historical studies concerned with its own period and attempts to take account of both the logistics and the significance of the bond between the texts it examines and the culture from which they arose. One might be tempted to call this a form of cultural materialism, but more simply it is an attempt to interpret and understand a group of texts that belonged to a highly specific culture and context, which in turn was responsible for their existence and function and a certain encoding process through which they passed.

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13 David Aers, 'Reading *Piers Plowman*', p.4.
14 David Aers, 'Reading *Piers Plowman*', p.4.
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16 David Aers, 'Reading *Piers Plowman*', p.4.
17 David Aers, 'Reading *Piers Plowman*', p.4.

Exactly what the term 'The Reformation' means today is a complex issue. As Patrick Collinson has recently so clearly pointed out[18], the reformation of the English church has been mythologised by posterity. Certainly recent scholarship puts forward a convincing argument that, over the years, many unsubstantiated and controversial aspects of religious change in the sixteenth century have been reified in the service of prejudice. Undoubtedly documents show that in the sixteenth century serious changes were made to the structure and government of the English church, but they may not have contributed to the same picture - or collection of smaller snapshots - that the subsequent huge output of Reformation historical writing proposes.[19]

I concur with many other historians (see note 19) that mythological versions or aspects of the English reformation may be partly explained by the fact that, from its very beginnings with contemporary propagandists like John Foxe, Reformation historiography has always been in the service of self-interested parties. Subsequent histories of the English reformation also have - until extremely recently - been written from a position of denominational allegiance and played a crucial role in the position of the Anglican[20] church in

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[18] In 'The English Reformation 1945-1955', op.cit, p.2.

[19] For surveys of the historiography of the English Reformation and its relation to confession and State politics from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century see Rosemary O'Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London: Methuen, 1986), A. G. Dickens and John Tonkin, *The Reformation in Historical Thought* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985). For a rarified but clear summary of the histories from John Foxe to the Tractarian Movement see David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs,* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1970, repr. 1992). Loades only deals with the mainstream histories that were Protestant, Catholic or - from within the Anglican church itself - anglo-Catholic and evangelical.

[20] Use of the term Anglican is problematic because of presbyterian, puritan, evangelical and anglo-catholic factions within the English reformed church and because of issues of national identity, but when I use it I simply mean the territorial English Church that was formed during the sixteenth century. On Anglicanism and nationalism see: Ernst Troelstch, *Protestantism and Progress* (London: Fortress, 1986); R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1938); and Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* trans. by Talcott Parsons and intro. by Anthony Giddens (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991; first pub. 1930). For more recent assessments see: Patrick Collinson, 'The Protestant Nation', in *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, The Third Anstey Memorial Lectures in the University of Kent at Canterbury 12-15 May 1986 (London: Macmillan, 1988); Borden W. Painter, 'Anglican Terminology in Recent Tudor and Stuart Historiography', *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 56:3 (1987), 237-249; Andrew Hadfield and John McVeagh, *Strangers to that Land: British*

Europe, or concerning the continued presence of practising Catholics in England. One of the first contemporary histories to deal specifically with the English reformation and possibly the most widely read book of this nature in the period, John Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* (first English edition 1563) itself formulated a denominational history of the Protestant church and was used alongside the authorised Bible, the books of *Common Prayer* and *Homilies*, and Erasmus' *Paraphrases* as a rampart from which the ideological construction of the English territorial church under Elizabeth could be defended.[21] Consequently, the *Actes and Mounumentes* has been preserved uncritically as *the* history of the sixteenth-century Protestant English church. But, although Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* is important because of its evident popularity, I

Perceptions of Ireland from the Reformation to the Famine, Ulster Editions and Monographs 5 (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1994); and Brendan Bradshaw, et. al. (eds.), *Representing Ireland: Literature and the origins of conflict, 1534-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). On Anglicanism and puritanism see: Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp.4-6 (for a succinct exposition of the debate); Paul Christianson, 'Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts', *JEH*, 31 (1980), 463-4 (for a bibliography of the debate); Patrick Collinson, *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), pp.7-11; and John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan attitudes towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986), cap.1.

[21] On the historiography of Foxe see: J. F. Mozley, *John Foxe and His Books* (London: Macmillan, 1940); Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963); William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1964); V. Norskov Olsen, *John Foxe and the Elizabethan Church* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Richard Baukham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth-Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman*, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 8 (Abbingdon: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978); Katharine R. Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Catharine Davies and Jane Facey, 'A Reformation Dilemma: John Foxe and the Problem of Discipline', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:1 (Jan. 1988), 37-65; John Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Patrick Collinson, 'Truth and Legend: the Veracity of John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*', in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994). For a useful comparison of the development of English Protestant historiography with that on the continent see, for example: the analysis of the German chronicler Johann Sleidan's work by Ingeborg Vogelstein in *Johann Sleidan's* Commentaries: *Vantage Point of a Second Generation Lutheran* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1986), and 'Johann Sleidan's *Commentaries*: New Insights from an Old History', *Storia della Storiografia* [Italy], 11 (1987), 5-21, which, among other things, claim that there was a reemphasis, in sixteenth-century German historical writing, on the use of documentation and, therefore, that there is a similarity between the techniques of Sleidan in his *A Famous Chronicle of oure time* (London: Jhon Daie for Nicholas Englande, 1560; first edn. Strasbourg, 1555) and Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* (London: John Day, 1563); and Stanford W. Reid, 'The Four Monarchies of Daniel in Reformation Historiography', *Historical Reflections* [Canada], 8:1 (1981), 115-123, which shows how Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon and Johann Sleidan used the 'four monarchies' prophecy of Daniel in the form of their historical writing.

think the archival work and historiography of the authors I discuss in this thesis, as well as the contributions of continental Protestant ecclesiastical historians is underplayed in discussions of Foxe.[22]

I will show that, by the time Foxe began to conceive of his ecclesiastical history *The Actes and Monumentes,* the concept of Protestant reformation history was already current among English and continental reformers. Not only was this the case, I argue, but also the early English anti-episcopal propaganda, in particular, contributed significantly to this. For example in 1550 an augmented (chronologically extended) English version of John Carion's *Chronicle* appeared from the press of Gwalter Lynne, a well-known Protestant writer, translator, patron, publisher and printer.[23] The original version of Carion's history, edited by Philip Melanchthon and printed in Wittemberg, had appeared as early as 1532.[24] In his article on the development of Reformation historiography,[25] Avihu Zakai describes Protestant historiography during the Reformation and the apocalyptic tradition in England from 1558 to the seventeenth century. Zakai claims that Protestants began studying history intensely in the sixteenth century in order to refute the historical foundations of the Catholic Church. He calls Carion's *Chronicle* (1532) the first major work of Protestant historiography, and shows how it divided history into categories according to four monarchies (Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, and Roman)

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22 In *John Bale: Mythmaker for the English Reformation* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976), Leslie P. Fairfield does trace the influence that Bale may have had on Foxe but this does not show the extent to which discourses of martyrdom were well established by other writers much earlier than Bale's pieces.

23 Johann Carion, *The thre bokes of cronicles that J. Carion gathered*, trans. by Gwalter Lynne (London: S. Mierdman for G. Lynne, 1550).

24 Johann Carion, *Chronica durch Magistru. Johan Carion, vleissig zusamen gezogen, meniglich nützlich zu lesen* (Gedruckt durch G. Rhaw: Wittemberg, [1532]). This went through several editions and reprintings, including the Lynne version, in Latin, French and English in 1537, 1548, 1550, 1553, and 1560.

25 Avihu Zakai, 'Reformation, History and Eschatology in English Protestantism', *History and Theory* 26:3 (1987), 300-318.

tending toward Apocalypse, with the Reformation coming just before the end of time. Zakai argues that the historiography of English reformers from 1558 to the seventeenth century was made possible through serious historical research and exegesis of scripture. As a result of this, continues Zakai, such historiography expounded a theory of the direct transmission of the apostolic church to England, and the subsequent usurpation of it by the Church of Rome. Other historical archival work by, for example, John Bale, John Leland, Nicholas Brigham and Matthew Parker shows a similar sense of Protestant historiography. Although the work of these authors was intended to preserve the archives of the monastic libraries at the time of their impending dissolution, the product of their researches was used in the compilation of histories framed by the distinctly Protestant historiography.[26]

In their books, anti-Roman and anti-episcopal propagandists made good use of such historical researches, because it was clear that 'factual evidence' (this is how they presented it) added a crucial potency to their arguments. For example, John Bale, in his autobiographical account *The vocacyon of Johan Bale,*[27] used the New Testament figure Joseph of Arimathea to mark the inception of authentic apostolic Christianity in England. An anti-Marian piece of propaganda, published in Rome and smuggled into England in 1553, *The*

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[26] These historical archivists are discussed in detail in a number of articles: James Alsop, 'Nicholas Brigham (d. 1558), Scholar, Antiquary, and Crown Servant', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12:1 (1981), 49-67; Norman L. Jones, 'Matthew Parker, John Bale, and the Magdeburg Centuriators', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12:3 (1981), 35-49; Ronald Harold Fritze, '"Truth Hath Lacked Witnesse, Tyme Wanted Light": the Dispersal of the English Monastic Libraries and Protestant Efforts at Preservation, ca.1535-1625', *Journal of Library History*, 18:3 (1983), 274-291; Trevor Ross, 'Dissolution and the Making of the English Literary Canon: the Catalogues of Leland and Bale', *Renaissance and Reformation* [Canada], 15:1 (1991), 57-80; Stan Mendyck, 'Early British Chorography', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 17:4 (1986), 459-481; James P. Carley, 'John Leland and the Contents of English Pre-Dissolution Libraries: the Cambridge Friars', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* [Great Britain], 9:1 (1986), 90-100; and Barrett L. Beer, 'John Stow and the English Reformation, 1547-1559', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 16:2 (1985), 257-271, and 'John Stow and Tudor Rebellions, 1549-1569', *Journal of British Studies*, 27:4 (1988), 352-374.

[27] John Bale, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishoprick of Ossorie in Irelande his persecucions in ye same + finall delyueraunce* (Rome: [n.pub.], 1553).

vocacyon is a description of Bale's troubles as a Protestant bishop, appointed during the Protestant reign of Edward VI, in the still predominantly Catholic Ireland, and a narrative of his escape from Ossory as the force of the Marian persecution began to gather momentum (I discuss this piece in more detail as anti-episcopal propaganda later). Bale did not miss his opportunity in this book to justify, in an introductory historical account, why he believed the Marian Catholic regime was based on false precepts. In this account, Bale's Joseph displaces any figures that Catholic writers may have nominated as founders of English Christianity when he says:

> He ['Joseph an hebrue'] published there [in Britain] amonge them [the inhabitants in 63 A.D.] that Gospell of saluacion whiche Christe first of all + afterwardes hys Apostles had taught at Jerusalem. Untruly therfore are we reported of the Italyane writers and of the subtylle deuysers of sanctes legendes that we shulde haue our first faythe from Rome and our christen doctryne from their vnchristen byshoppes. From the schole of Christe himselfe haue we receyued the documentes of oure fayth. From Jerusalem + not from Rome whom both Peter + also christe hath called Babylon for that she so aptely thervnto agreeth in ministrying confusion to the world.[28]

Joseph of Arimathea appears, unanticipated, in all four passion narratives[29] requesting the body of Jesus after the Crucifixion in order to entomb it. Apocryphally he is also said to have visited England and built a church at Glastonbury. Thus, in the hands of Protestant propagandists such as those of Bale here, he is a faithful and selfless disciple of Christ and, because of his evangelical mission to England, the true cypher through which the genuine (Protestant) church was transmitted directly from Jerusalem to England.

The work of the researchers, expositors and propagandists discussed immediately above shows that a well-developed Protestant historiography was being deployed and absorbed as early as the 1530's - and these represent only a small percentage of the whole. Well before the Latin precursor of the *Actes and Monumentes*, Foxe's *Rerum in Ecclesia gestarum,* appeared in Basel in

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28 John Bale, *The vocacyon,* sig.B.iiii.ᵛ.

29 Mark 15:43-46; Matthew 27:57-60; Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-42.

1559, at least five other major Protestant chronicles had been released: Jean Crespin's *The History of the Martyrs* (Geneva, 1554), Ludwig Rabe's, *Stories of God's Chosen Witneses and Martyrs* (Strasbourg, 1552), Heinrich Pantaleone's *History of the Martyrs* (Strasbourg, 1555), Johann Sleidan's *A Famous Chronicle of oure time* (Strasbourg, 1555) and Matthias Flaccius Illyricus' *Catalog of the Witnesses of Truth* (Basel, 1556). Foxe's work is clearly not the beginning of an English Protestant tradition but one small part in the culmination of research on Protestant figures, and a highly developed sense of Protestant historiography. The writers and texts that I examine contributed significantly to this historiography.

The concept of history in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* - one of a true but hidden persecuted church - was modelled on the much earlier (fourth-century) historiographical precedent set by Eusebius' *History of the Church.*[30] Over the course of the first and subsequent revised and extended editions of his *Actes and Monumentes,* Foxe formed this concept of history by building a chronological narrative from a huge collection of original documents and 'eyewitness accounts' of the lives and conduct of Protestant heroes and heroines. He also showed the political circumstances surrounding - in certain cases - the indictments, examinations, trials and executions of Protestant martyrs of a true hidden church persecuted by a deformed visible church (medieval Catholicism) in order to constitute, in the reformed English church, an authoritative apostolic succession of true humility. Without doubt, not only Foxe but other earlier sixteenth-century Protestant historians revitalised such a polemical historiography, and put it to specific political use in favour of the

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30 *The History of the Church* survives in its original Greek in several manuscripts. For a modern editions see *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*, trans. by G. A. Williamson, rev. and ed. by Andrew Louth (London: Penguin, 1989). See n.21.

establishment of a Protestant church during the Reformation. In the 'Introduction' to *The Oxford Martyrs*[31] David Loades remarks how Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* of 1563 signals the development of the English Reformation under Elizabeth and that its historical material was used to support this. He remarks how the previous propagandist work of Christopher St. German had merely been a negative disavowal of the allegiance that England owed to Rome in support of the Henrician changes. I agree with Loades' general assertion that the publication of Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* (1563) suggests official sanction for a more complete separation of the English church from Rome in pronouncing and showing - from a huge amount of documentary evidence - a coherent tradition of an English Protestant church descending from the Apostles themselves. Foxe's revitalisation of the Eusebean historiography portrayed the officially settled separated English church as one of impeccable provenance and pedigree, descended as it was without interruption from the primitive church of Christ. Among other propaganda pieces it provided the English state and protestant subjects with a justification for the existence of their own territorial church. But I argue that other communities had already created a form of writing to show this.

When Foxe first published the *Actes and Monumentes* the final political structure of the English church and its relation to the State was by no means settled, and this is where and why the denominational and partisan historiography continues. I shall return in detail to the way in which this form of history plays a significant part in the story of the episcopal polity of the English territorial church c.1520-1595, but for now Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* serves as a single example of the way in which histories of the Reformation

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31 pp.20-37.

began as denominational and politically partisan. This is how 'The English Reformation' was and is an ideological construct.

Orthodox Protestant histories as justifications of the course of the English Reformation continued in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The most well known and prominent of these are Fuller's *Church History* (1615), Burnet's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (1679-1715), and Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (1721) and *Annals of the Reformation* (1709-31). On the other hand Catholic apologists such as Hugh Tootel and Clerophilus Alethus also prepared their own version of the English Reformation in support of their own political and denominational positions.[32] The histories of the English Reformation that were produced in each epoch promoted a version of the events of the sixteenth century that supported the denominational and political position - for example, separatist, orthodox Anglican or Catholic - of the author or institution that produced them.[33]

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[32] Hugh Tootel published his *The Church History of England from 1500 to the Year 1688, Chiefly with Regard to Catholicks*, 3 vols. (Brussels: [n.pub], 1737-42) under the pseudonym Charles Dodd and Alethus (pseud.), *A Specimen of Amendments candidly proposed* (London: [n.pub], 1741) took a more sanguine Catholic position in criticizing the moderation of Dodd's version of the English Reformation.

[33] It would be superfluous to rehearse this here since it has already been clearly identified in the works cited above, n.19. But see also the review articles of Dickens' and Tonkin's book: G. R. Elton, 'Review Essay: Reformation in Historical Thought', *History and Theory*, 25:3 (1986), 336-342; and Ronald H. Fritze, 'Through a Glass Darkly? Some Modern Histrorians on the Motivation, Methodology, and Development of Historical Writing: a Review Article', *Lamar Journal of the Humanities*, 13:2 (1987), 53-71. None of these surveys seem to account for the considerable output by American and fellow English baptist church historians in the early nineteenth century. Their texts demonstrate a celebration of the independent church since the sixteenth century. See for example: John Waddington, *1559-1620. Track of the Hidden Church; or, the Springs of the Pilgrim Movement*, intro. by Rev. E. N. Kirk (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1863); John Waddington, *John Penry, the Pilgrim Martyr, 1559-1593* (London: W. & F.G. Cashe, 1854); B. Evans (DD.), *The Early English Baptists*, 2 vols. (London: J. Heaton & Son, 1862 and 1864); and Parsons Cooke, *A History of German Anabaptism gathered mostly from German writers, living in the age of the Lutheran Reformation, and embracing a full view of the Peasant's Wars, The Celestial Prophets, and other Fanatics of that Day, and of the Historical Connection between the Present Baptists and the Anabaptists* (Boston: Charles Tappan, 1845). These histories portray the early separatists of the sixteenth century and the 'pilgrims' of the seventeenth century, who sought sanctuary from religious persecution by emigrating to the New World, as the founders of a political ethos that built a successful liberal America. These kinds of history of the English Reformation come in the aftermath of American Independence and - in the contemporary tradition of political emancipation - as an example of how America was eventually powerful enough to liberate itself from the tyranny of imperialism. They celebrate the social polity of baptist church organization (Waddington) and defend this structure against the association of them with the 'excesses' of sixteenth century Anabaptists (Cooke). Just as certain versions of the orthodox changes made in the

While in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Burnet, Fuller and Strype are significant largely as orthodox archival collections rather than denominational polemic they still functioned as history that served to support the established English church. However, in the late eighteenth century with the Bill for Catholic Emancipation and in the early nineteenth century, with the related issues of the Irish Question and the Oxford Movement for example, histories of the English reformation were once again set to play a major role in the course of political events and in the fate of the Anglican church, just as they had done during the events of the formation of the territorial church in the sixteenth century. For example, the Bill for emancipation of Catholics sought to lift the penal laws against English Catholics, including their holding political or military office, and the implications of such reform also revealed the severe tensions in a Church that was split internally by the factions of anglo-catholicism, orthodoxy and evangelism. In an article entitled 'Mary's Protestant Martyrs and Elizabeth's Catholic Traitors in the Age of Catholic Emancipation', John Drabble discusses the influence of this Bill on the history of the English Reformation that was formulated in this period.[34] Drabble argues that, in support of the Bill, Catholic apologists and Whig historians sought to play down the level of persecution under Mary I and emphasize the extent of Catholic martyrdom under Elizabeth I. This reinterpretation was a reversal of the Anglican version of the Reformation that had prevailed since Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes*. The emancipatory political ideologies that overdetermine this

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English Reformation in the sixteenth century may have contributed to the formation of an independent national(istic) consciousness (see above, n.20), so in the nineteenth century versions of 'separatist' church history are used to support the national consciousness of the former American colonies soon after they have gained their own independence. There are other examples of this kind of 'history' which show that there was much more to the English reformation than Protestant against Catholic both then and subsequently.

[34] John E. Drabble, 'Mary's Protestant Martyrs and Elizabeth's Catholic Traitors in the Age of Catholic Emancipation', *Church History*, 51.2 (June, 1982), 172-185.

period of historical writing on the English Reformation are, of course, more numerous than these three religious issues alone. The arguments that were pitted against the ideology of the Protestant State church - including the cult of an idealised medievalism inherent in Romanticism, and the emancipatory politics, first, of that major strike against State identity in the American War of Independence, and secondly, of the French Revolution - also made a contribution to the way in which history was written.[35] But these alone serve to illustrate how the history of the Reformation swung into revisionist and counter-revisionist mode.

Under such circumstances, the whole question of the doctrinal and political authority of the Anglican church was once again a crucial factor in state politics and international relations. Because these histories were designed to function from within this political vortex, the 'English Reformation' was built accordingly. It was only very recently - in the second half of this century - that histories of the Reformation began to formulate new versions of what happened to the English Church in the sixteenth century, because they were partly liberated from that parallel role of church/state history and political polemic. In 'The English Reformation 1945-1955' (op.cit.), Collinson points out that the English church and academic studies of the Reformation were dominated by the anglo-catholic ideology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Collinson also perceptively observes that the history of the English Reformation from this period was domineered by the use of governmental sources, a legacy that some later historians inherited without recognition of its effects.[36] But it was

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35 On the repudiation of English authority by America see above, n.33.

36 Examples of this 'constitutional' history are: G. W. Prothero (ed.), *Select Statutes and other Constitutional Documents Illustrative of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894); Henry Gee and William Hardy, *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London: Macmillan, 1896; repub. 1910 and 1966); Joseph Tanner, *Tudor Constitutional Documents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922; repub. 1930); and G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution* (Cambridge:

only even more recently, beginning slowly in the 1970s and 1980s that personal denominational history ceased to play a *major* role in the writing and teaching of the history of the English Reformation. However, this general tendency towards a more scientific study of the Reformation must, it seems, be accepted with some caution. As recently as 1987 a controversy broke out over the relative merits and strengths of Catholicism and Protestantism in England in the sixteenth century, and the form of this argument reveals how personal religious belief can still affect the evaluation of sources in the writing of English Reformation history.[37]

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a vogue for the statistical analysis of preambles and testament obits with a view to isolating the piety of individuals (a practice that was originally employed by A. G. Dickens in *The English Reformation* [1964]).[38] But it is clear that, even with such statistical analysis, the production of denominational history is not precluded and the conclusions that may be drawn from such research are open to question.[39]

Historical writing of the twentieth century about the English Reformation has therefore inherited two major ideological factors of overdetermination (politics and confession) that could compromise what might be called - in an endeavour to be as neutral as possible - the academic veracity of the results of such research. In addition to this, even since the partial liberation of histories of the English Reformation from state-denominational obligations in this century,

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Cambridge University Press, 1960), which was basically a re-editing of Tanner's earlier book.

37 See below, n.42.

38 A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London: Batsford, 1964). See, for example: P.W Fleming, 'Charity, Faith, and the Gentry of Kent 1422-1529', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. by A. J. Pollard (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984), pp.36-58; and Clive Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service: Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36:1 (1985), 46-65.

39 For a recent very good reassessment of the value of the use of preambles to determine personal piety and trends of change during the reformation see: Claire Cross, 'Wills as evidence of popular piety in the reformation period; Leeds and Hull, 1540-1640', in *The End of Strife*, ed. by David Loades (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1984).

there are dominant complicating factors in the way that this history has been written, and these have been created by the institutions from which the bulk of the work emanates as well as in the choice of primary sources used to formulate the historical versions. For example, it is now a commonplace that the sovereignty of government sources over late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century histories of the English Reformation created only a very limited view of the actual events.[40] It was F. M. Powicke in *The Reformation in England* (1941) who first coined the phrase 'act of state' as a description of the general nature of the English Reformation . This myopic history of the English Reformation was essentially continued by the vast scholarly output of G. R. Elton: most historians would now agree that, eminent and scholarly as Elton's work may be, it is limited by the fact that it sees the events of the Reformation from behind the desk of Thomas Cromwell.[41] The publication in 1950 of T. M. Parker's *The English Reformation to 1558*[42] and especially in 1959 and 1964 respectively of A. G. Dickens' *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558* (1959)[43] and his *The English Reformation* (1964), revolutionised this previous kind of English Reformation history in its use of sources relating to underground movements and the way in which it prioritised the role of these. For Dickens, in these studies the English reformation came about not through the policies of Henry VIII and his vicegerent Thomas Cromwell but through a groundswell of popular protest against the official form of the Church - most commonly known as Lollardy.

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40 See above n.36.

41 For example see: *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

42 (London: Oxford University Press, 1950).

43 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959; repr. 1966).

More recently this generally accepted view as to the 'causes' of the English Reformation has come under attack by what has come to be known as revisionism. In turn this has been followed up by a counter-revisionism which has taken two forms: the direct response to the 'Catholic Reformed' historiography of Christopher Haigh and others by Dickens and adherents to his original thesis, supported by new evidence; and a suggestion that the form of the thesis/revisionism/counter-revisionism situation for the history of the English Reformation is essentially an historiographical cul-de-sac, emergence from which can only be made by a new methodology. The revisionism began with the publication of *The English Reformation Revised* (1987), edited by Christopher Haigh.[44] After the publication of Haigh's book in 1987 this controversy over the predominance of Catholic and elite culture (the Haigh thesis) or Protestant and popular culture (the Dickens thesis) during the sixteenth century continued with A. G. Dickens', 'The Early Expansion of Protestantism in England, 1520-1558', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 78: (1987) 187-222. This answered Haigh's criticisms point by point and included further research in support of this. Eamon Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (1992)[45] is an important recent contribution to the argument for Catholic continuity.

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[44] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; repr. 1992). I am grateful to Patrick Collinson who pointed out to me that all of the essays in this collection - with the exception of Ronald Hutton's, 'The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformations', pp.114-138 - had previously been published elsewhere. It seems that the genesis of this 'Catholic Reformed' history that was marshalled together to oppose the general thesis of A. G. Dickens' *The English Reformation* (1964) began with the following articles: Christopher Haigh, 'Anticlericalism and the English Reformation', *History*, 68:224 (1983), 391-407 (which denies the prevalence or importance of anti-clerical sentiment in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century); Patrick McGrath, 'Elizabethan Catholicism: A Reconsideration', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35:3 (1984), 414-428. (which is critical of Haigh's argument that there was continuity and vibrancy in Catholicism throughout the sixteenth century); and Christopher Haigh, 'English Catholicism During the Reformation: Revisionism, the Reformation and the History of English Catholicism, followed by A Reply to Dr. Haigh', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36:3 (1985), 394-406 (which is a reply by Haigh to the former article by McGrath and includes a short further reply to Haigh by McGrath).

[45] (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992; repr. 1994).

So, the seminal work that presented the main challenge to the Dickens' thesis that the conversion of England to Protestantism was swift and emanated from widespread popular protest was Christopher Haigh's (ed.) *The English Reformation Revised* (1987). This is a collection of essays which Haigh suggests show that reformation in England was neither welcome nor swift because anticlericalism was not a powerful ideology in the 1520s, and because there were still substantial Catholic power bases with popular backing well into Elizabeth's reign. In the Introduction to this collection Haigh links the historiography of Dickens' *The English Reformation* (1964) directly to the tradition of Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* (first ed. 1563) and claims that Dickens made a retrospective approach to the English Reformation by assuming that it was virtually complete after the Elizabethan settlement of 1558-9 and then searching for and presenting sources to prove this. Haigh's revisionism then, claims that - contrary to Dickens' general thesis that the English Reformation came about swiftly and largely in response to popular protest and demands - the sixteenth century saw no great revolution from the late-medieval English Church or popular attitudes to it. In addition to the assertion that there was a continuity in popular Catholic piety during the sixteenth century, Haigh's book also claims that any changes were a result not of popular pietistic demands but of political exigency controlled and implemented 'from above' directly by the ruling and other factional power elites. It is abundantly clear that - as already noted - this challenge to the Dickens thesis is not constructive historiographically. Although Haigh has denied any denominational influence on the form of the 'revision' made in *The English Reformation Revised* (cf. his *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and*

Society Under the Tudors),[46] it is clearly in support of a 'vibrant' (Haigh's own term) Catholic piety in England throughout the course of the sixteenth century. In my opinion the major flaw in the Haigh revision is that, at the same time as it challenges the Dickens thesis on the basis of the inefficacy of 'whiggish' historiography, the 'Introduction' to *The English Reformation Revised* itself sets out to present evidence in support of the notion of a progressive reinvigoration of Catholicism during the period. This fault line in the Haigh revision would suggest indeed that Haigh's challenge is not a methodological one but is based on denominational and/or political principles. Implicit in Haigh's revision of the Dickens thesis is the simple opposition of a pro-Catholic history of the English Reformation to the previous pro-Protestant one and thus it would appear to be, not new and revisionist, but both historiographically dated and denominational. As a response to the prevailing Dickens thesis, *The English Reformation Revised* is a counteractive move similar to that of Whig historians and Catholic apologists who produced new histories of the English Reformation in the wake of the emancipatory ideologies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and in particular to the Bill for Catholic Emancipation. Both 'revisions' seek to redress the position of sixteenth-century Catholics and Catholic piety by rewriting the course of politics relating to the Church in the sixteenth century against a prevailing historiography that justified and celebrated the formation of an English Protestant church. It is noteworthy that Haigh's argument for a continuity rather than a revolution in the government and doctrine of the English Church during the sixteenth century is identical to the revision of the 'causes' of the English Civil War in the way that it denies the existence of any reformation at all.

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46 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

There is therefore currently a sense of crisis in the state of English Reformation historiography. Somewhat ironically, it is the historiography developed in recent studies of the European *counter-Reformation* that provides the methodology for a new approach. I say ironically, because conventionally the counter-Reformation has always attempted to oppose the formation of territorial churches outside Papal control, but it is recent studies of how Roman Catholicism and the Papacy attempted to maintain their authority that may actually reveal a clearer picture of how and why England managed a successful separation from Rome.

The call for a new methodology has been made by, for example, Craig Harline in his article 'Official Religion - Popular Religion in Recent Historiography of the Catholic Reformation',[47] and Patrick Collinson in 'The English Reformation, 1945-1955'. This thesis follows the notion that it is indeed a form of cultural history(ies) that is needed to break the impasse, and considers that an analysis of a certain printed dialogue between English bishops and Protestant reformers can make a contribution to this. In his bibliographical essay on the course and recent developments of the historiography of studies in the European counter-Reformation, Craig Harline suggests that new insights into this field can only be accomplished through a reassessment of what has been defined as 'official' and 'popular' religion.[48] Collinson has also suggested that the term 'popular' simply cannot be used now because of the ideological baggage that it carries when he says that 'popular' is 'an overworked and unfortunate term insofar as it indicates, not a socially cross-sectional religious consensus, but an invidious distinction between the

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[47] Craig Harline, 'Official Religion - Popular Religion in Recent Historiography of the Catholic Reformation', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 81 (1990), 239-262.

[48] Harline, 'Official Religion'.

beliefs and habits of the illiterate and ordinary masses and clerical and lay elites'.[49]

Harline suggests that in the last two decades (but especially since the mid-1980s) the use of a scientific methodology - approaches that include psychology, statistics, anthropology and sociology - in historical studies of the counter-Reformation has provided a way out of denominational history. He says that because this has been coupled with a new emphasis on the role of the populace beyond the cardinals, nuncios and bishops, a considerable reinterpretation of the process and effects of the Catholic Reformation in Europe has been posed.[50] However, Harline points out that despite this new approach and the insights it has provided there remain some inherent historiographical problems that should be addressed. The first of these is in the definition of and research on 'official' religion which is at present underresearched within the terms of the new methodology because of the general shift towards aspects of religion relating to the people. The second is a reassessment of the relationship between 'official' and 'popular' religion. Harline calls for a re-examination of the religious elite like cardinals and bishops - even though they were the main areas of Reformation studies over the past four centuries - because this would benefit from the new methodologies. Harline suggests that the term 'official' should take account of the fact that bishops

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49 Collinson, 'The English Reformation, 1945-1955', p.20.

50 As examples of this new methodology to which Harline refers see, for example: Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin, 1971); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985); Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) and *The Night Battles*, trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). See also: Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy*, Studies in the History of Sexuality (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Strikes and Salvation at Lyons', in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Gloucester: Duckworth, 1975), pp.1-16; and Carlo Ginzburg, 'Proofs and Possibilities: In the Margins of Natalie Zemon Davis' *The Return of Martin Guerre*', in *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, 37 (1988), 113-127.

could be renegades in terms of doctrine or polity just as the popular movements could be conservative. Indeed several texts that I look at in this thesis - texts which denounce unreformed Tudor episcopacy and the conservative Church hierarchy - were written by Protestants who served on, or very close to, the episcopal bench at some point in their ecclesiastical careers. This acknowledgement of the amorphous nature of traditions and influences stretching across *post facto* redundant historiographical boundaries would, says Harline, enable a critical re-examination of the relationship between 'popular' and 'official' religion.

Examples of this kind of shared experience and interaction abound in the case of the English Reformation but have not been clearly identified in this way. There are the figures like Hugh Latimer, John Bale, John Ponet and William Barlow all of whom could be described as reformers, but all of whom held tenure as bishops for varying periods. From this new perspective of possible overlap and interaction the fate of Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer at the hands of Mary I and Edmund Bonner are no longer one-dimensional indicators of the swing between Protestant and Catholic regimes in the sixteenth century. Neither can their fate be used either as examples of martyrdom to celebrate the grace of the persecuted Protestant church, or to exonerate Mary's Catholic regime from charges of bloodthirsty and excessive persecution, as has been the condition of representations of the English Reformation from the sixteenth century to the present. Rather, modern research on such bishops is poised to pay attention to the complex relationship between the bishops and religion within all areas of the parish - a form of study to which this thesis is intended to contribute. On the other hand conservative rebellions like the Pilgrimage of

Grace or the Western Rising reveal how important it is to inspect the sites at which culture and class interact rather than to demarcate some form of 'popular' or 'official' religion or of elite and popular culture.

In this thesis I examine the writing and activity of the above reforming bishops and evaluate anti-episcopal propaganda as an area where Protestant reformers were negotiating their position against conservative bishops and attempting to establish their pietistic legitimacy. Principally, I explore the literary forms used by bishop reformers and other propagandists, but, as a corollary, this also offers important new material on the Reformation.

For Harline there is also a third methodological problem that needs to be addressed. This is the theory of acculturation which has been developed within the new scientific histories of which Harline speaks, but which does not redress the old methodological bias that had produced a History of elite culture alone. It suggests that all culture originates from an elite group and is merely passed on or passed down form here. Robert Muchembled was the principal advocate of the acculturation thesis,[51] and the debate over his assertions about acculturation is possibly the largest and longest within the evolution of new historical theory. Historical studies which pay attention to the notion of acculturation are concerned with how a particular community comes to view the world as it does. They propose to inquire into how and why a particular group of people learn about, believe in and interact with their surroundings. Altercation over the relative merits or flaws of the theory of acculturation poses crucial

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[51] See Robert Muchembled originally in *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (XV^e-XVIII^e siecle). Essai* (Paris: Flammarion, 1978), and followed up in, for example: 'The Witches of the Cambrésis: the Acculturation of the Rural World in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' in *Religion and the People, 800-1700*, ed. by James Obelkevich (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp.221-276; 'Lay Judges and the Acculturation of the Masses (France and the Southern Low Countries, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)', trans. by John Burke, in *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800*, ed. by Kaspar von Greyerz, The German Historical Institute (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp.56-65.

questions: in what way (and by which section of society) is culture produced and transmitted?; is the process of transmission among social groups simple or complex?; and how can the investigation of culture proceed from the sources available to the historian? It appears that in fact the best way to answer these questions is to identify them as misleading in exactly the same way as the Dickens-Haigh debate resulted from *questions mal posées.* Attempting to answer these questions does not provide a way forward, but to understand culture *not* as a product but as a *process* does. It is interesting to note that, in the broad schemes within English Reformation historiography this century, Dickens argues for a swift conversion to Protestantism by popular demand, whereas Elton argues that the Reformation in England was accomplished before the reactionary measures of Mary I but that it was instigated 'from above', and Haigh that Protestantism was never firmly established in the sixteenth century. Within the broad positions of the new histories of the Counter-Reformation, Muchembled becomes a figure like Elton or Haigh in the way he argues for a dominating and foisting elite culture.

Spotting the redundancy of questions concerning the transmission of culture is a welcome accomplishment. It suggests that the Reformation was much more complex and sophisticated than a struggle of 'Catholic' against 'Protestant', and that boundaries such as 'official' and 'popular' religion, while representing convenient starting points for historical study, need to be broken down if a more authentic history of the reformation is to be produced. For these reasons I also follow the methodological premise laid out by D. W. Sabean in the 'Introduction' to *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany.*[52] Here, Sabean remarks that culture should not be

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52 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

viewed as a product, in the way that Muchembled would suggest that all culture is produced and foisted (poked into the population by some means) by an elite, but rather that culture is a 'process' in which negotiations are made between social groups. When texts are understood as social acts that were embedded in an historically specific cultural context and possessed an illocutionary function just like any other utterance, this idea of negotiation can certainly provide compelling interpretations. Such a theory may not only be closer to the mark of what actually occurred during the period under study, but also put an end to the fruitless altercation over which social group produces (dictates) culture. Concomitantly, it also provides a model whereby the old lines of religious denomination can be broken down because, following this model, the English Reformation is seen as a process of interaction. The location of cultural supremacy or hegemony is no longer the issue. It is the processes and their results that count. So the observations made by both Craig Harline and D. W. Sabean - their focus on interaction - can provide new material on the Reformation and represent a methodology that can avoid the trap laid by Catholic/Protestant, High Church/Low Church or Episcopalian/Presbyterian dichotomies. In this thesis the interplay I examine is the dialogue that occurred between advocates of Protestant reforms and the bishops who opposed them. I find the result of this interaction to be a distinct, powerful and enduring form of writing that fashioned a potent semblance of tyrannical victimisation out of imprisonment and execution, and divinely sanctioned conduct out of heresy.

So I am concerned here with, roughly defined, two social groups: the reform propagandists and the English bishops they attacked in their texts. It is clear that most of the interaction detailed in the texts I look at is between these

circles but, in order to avoid the notion of 'official' (bishops) and 'popular' (reformers) for reasons already mentioned, I want to take these sets only as a useful point of departure. Often the distinction between these aggregations was blurred, such as when bishops themselves (like Miles Coverdale and John Bale) or important episcopal functionaries (like John Philpot) penned anti-episcopal martyrologies. Furthermore, the target of the propagandists' attack is not to be confused with the means by which it was achieved - although, it must be noted, these, too, are frequently difficult to distinguish. These texts took as their mark the status and authority of unreformed Tudor episcopacy, and the means by which this was targeted involved a printed condemnation of episcopal practices following careful note-taking and surveillance by prisoners and defendants. Many of the reformers were prepared to suffer deprivation, exile, torture and even death in order to promote the reforms of the English church in which they believed. The main propaganda books I look at are by Simon Fish, William Tyndale, George Joye, William Barlow, Robert Barnes, William Roy, William Turner, John Bale, Anne Askew, John Philpot, and Miles Coverdale, most of whose books were condemned as heretical in the proclamation of 1546 as shown at the beginning of this 'Introduction'. In these books confrontations were described with bishops such as John Longland, Cuthbert Tunstall, John Stokesley, Stephen Gardiner, and Edmund Bonner. Through sophisticated discursive techniques these texts presented a critique of the episcopal English church while they also served as Protestant evangelism. The condemnation of these books by the authorities serves as some measure of the power of the discursive techniques that their authors had produced.

History, as context, and historiography, as form, are crucial aspects of my argument in this thesis, but, primarily, I am not charting the *history* of the Reformation. What I am looking at is how early Reformation propaganda fashioned a form of literature that opposed English episcopacy. I will show how the historical need for early Reformation propagandists to produce an examination of the institution of episcopacy precipitated a specific type of literary creation. Reformist literature was set the task of explaining and deconstructing the hegemony and logomachic power of the early Tudor ecclesiastical hierarchy to its readers. It had to perform the very difficult task of demythologising a long tradition of Roman Catholic doctrine and polity that was embedded as popular piety, religious practice and parish institution. For such a task, a powerful and very persuasive form of writing was required. As Terry Eagleton has so lucidly remarked of John Milton's poetry of religious conflict in the seventeenth century, the revolutionary mythographer's task:

> is to furnish the political process with a set of efficacious symbols, universalize its meanings by inscribing them within a global drama, unify its disparate forces by the power of the image, and summon the past into metaphorical compact with the present. At stake in such revolutionary mythologizing is a struggle over the signifier, a fight for the hegemonic symbol.[53]

The reform propagandists at which I look also made a bid for scriptural hegemonic symbols by developing signifiers that produced a global martyrological drama celebrating the Protestant faith. The site around which such sophisticated forms of writing were produced was the episcopal administration of the English church. By identifying and examining forms of anti-episcopal propaganda, from reading a wide range of both well-known and more obscure or ignored texts, this thesis uncovers how and why such writing constructed arguments against bishops.

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[53] Terry Eagleton, 'The God That Failed', in Nyquist and Fergusson (ed.), *Re-membering Milton* (London: Methuen, 1988), p. 342.

Furthermore, it is often easy to forget how integral a part Tudor religion played in society. If the Roman Catholic authority was to be fundamentally reordered, as Protestantism suggested, then it was not just personal piety that would have to be adjusted. Alongside the Common Law, in England Canon Law, the law of the Roman Catholic church played a major role in the government of English society. The identification of the Roman Catholic order as corrupt meant that a revision of the *Decretals* (digests of canon law) that derived from it was also necessary. While the obligation to adjust one's conscience concerning personal faith could in itself be enough to incite civil action in some cases, the task of rewriting the laws of the realm would always divide and polarise different interests. This manifested itself in England in the protracted arguments over the royal supremacy, episcopal rule, civil obedience over matters of faith and the general position that an independent church should take within a State. I argue that the question of Tudor episcopal authority was the central area around which the course of the English Reformation had to progress, and that the texts of the English Protestant propagandists that I examine here played a central role in this issue. Reform propagandists realised what surviving records show us: that bishops were the natural custodians for policing a conservative 'official' reformation of English religious observance. Their texts therefore challenged the legal authority of bishops over matters of religion as well as developing a sophisticated set of discourses that undermined the bishops' position.

The vicissitudes of royal policy pertaining to the English reformation were many and these swings in attitude towards Protestantism and the reform of the English church were not solely formed by pietistic belief: they were often

exigent positions taken up for reasons of internal faction or international relations. The instatement, revision, revocation and reinstatement, by turns, of the 'heresy statute' is one such example of equivocation over the form of the English church, but it also draws attention to the prominent part that the English episcopate, as the institution that defined and tried heresy, played in the course of the English reformation. While, to a certain extent, this observation would appear to be a truism, there has in fact been no full-length study on the interaction of bishops and Protestant reformers in England. Neither has adequate attention been paid to the struggle for intellectual and legal control over heresy. The narratives analysed here will show just how important these aspects were, both to the Reformation and in forming a type of Protestant writing.

There was no single statute at the time that dealt solely with the issue of heresy. There were, however, a number of statutes, injunctions and publications in operation, as well as newly created, between 1520 and 1558 that can now be grouped together as all relating to heresy. They represent the contemporary *attitudes* to heresy, often at variance, by the Court, Parliament and the bishops. It was old legislation from Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V,[54] which had been designed to deal with Lollardy, that was in place on the eve of the Reformation. Under this law, individuals suspected of opinions that were at variance with Church dogma could be immediately examined and tried by the bishop of their diocese, and the ultimate punishment for unrenounced heresy was death by burning at the stake. In *The Tudor Constitution*[55] Professor Elton observes that '[u]ntil Wolsey's fall, "heresy" both new [Lutheranism] and old

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54 5 Richard II, c.5; 2 Henry IV, c.15 (known as *De Haeretico Comburendo* by which persons suspected of heresy were to be arrested and tried by canon law before being handed over to the King's Bench for the pronouncement of the death penalty); 2 Henry V, c.7.

55 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[Lollardy] had been little persecuted in England, but from 1529-1532 the bishops, supported by the new lord chancellor, Thomas More, acted more energetically'.[56] Elton's concentration on the issue of whether Sir Thomas More and his episcopal contemporaries were personally more vigilant than their predecessors in identifying 'heresy' can give a misleading view of the official and popular attitudes to forms of piety in the period. If heretical opinion is viewed as a phenomenon obtaining only when it is punished, a rather skewed picture of the situation can result because it places too much emphasis on the official sources and attitudes. It is clear from surviving records that before 1529 there was a great deal of activity to promote Protestantism by reformers (mostly in the distribution of old Lollard vernacular passages of the Bible and new translations and commentaries upon it), and that several bishops were extremely anxious about the circulation of such ideas.[57] Instances of the interaction between reformers and bishops created by these activities are detailed in the ensuing Chapters. This, coupled with the greater number of indictments for heresy during More's chancellorship, resulted in 'The Supplication Against the Ordinaries [bishops or their immediate legal deputies]' of 1532. This was a case presented by the Commons against a number of ecclesiastical abuses exercised by the Tudor episcopate, and in particular it sought to curb their *oyer and terminer* power over heresy. Partly as a result of the 'Supplication', in 1533 25 Henry VIII, c.14 came into force, which, while it was essentially a conservative statute, significantly lessened the arbitrary power of bishops over issues of heresy. Under the new statute episcopal

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56 *The Tudor Constitution*, p.396.

57 See, for example, John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials, relating chiefly to Religion, and the Reformation of it, and the Emergencies of the Church of England, under King Henry VIII. King Edward VI. and Queen Mary I. with large Appendixes, Containing original papers, Records, &c.*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822); I, ii, pp.50-65, which is a record of the attempted purge of vernacular Bibles and Lollard writing in the Cambridge and Essex areas.

heresy trials could only begin *after* an indictment at common law. In other words any individual suspected of heretical opinion had first to be examined by a lay jury on the matter, before falling under episcopal jurisdiction. This advantage gained by the Common Law and Protestantism against episcopal reaction continued through the 1530s. The Ten Articles (1536) and the Injunctions of 1536, and the 'Bishops' Book',[58] a book of instruction and devotion published in 1537, all reflect a compromise and partial accommodation of moderate new ideas under the control of the new supreme head of the English Church, the monarch.

But in 1539 came renewed reaction with the Act of Six Articles,[59] which simultaneously reasserted Catholic doctrine and revived the power of bishops to act on personal initiative against any activities they might have considered to be a manifestation of heretical thought. In 1543, while the publication of the 'King's Book'[60] showed that Catholic orthodoxy was still the favoured doctrine, 35 Henry VIII, c.5 - which laid down stricter rules for the procedure of heresy trials - shows that a partial curb was placed on the power of bishops over non-conformism.

After the death of Henry VIII in 1547, episcopal Protestantism, at least, enjoyed royal patronage under Edward VI and his Protectors. Somerset immediately gained a repeal of the Act of Six Articles and other heresy laws in 1547 which was embodied in 1 Edward VI, cc. 1, 12. Under this Edwardian revocation, suspected heretics were once again granted the right to a quest by Common Law jury to decide whether they should be placed in the hands of

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58 *The Institution of a Christen Man, conteynynge the Exposytion or Interpretation of the commune Crede, of the seuen Sacramentes, of the .X. commandementes, and of the Pater noster, and the Aue Maria, Justyfication ... Purgatory* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537).

59 See 31 Henry VIII, c.14.

60 *Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1543).

their bishop for trial. The official sponsorship of a piety underpinned by Protestant theology, and the corresponding relaxation of independent episcopal jurisdiction over heresy, granted during the reign of Edward VI was only to be once again reversed upon the accession of Mary I. In 1554 'An Act for the renewing of three statutes made for the punishment of heresies[61] reinstated all the statutes concerning heresy that had been in place before 1529.[62] In its wording this Marian statute asserted that, prior to the statute's implementation, heresy had 'grown and much increased within this realm' specifically because 'the ordinaries have wanted authority to proceed against those that were infected therewith'.[63] That Mary saw her bishops as the main vehicle to effect her policy of reinstating Catholic doctrine and the supremacy of the Pope, is also revealed in articles she sent in 1554 to Edmund Bonner, bishop of London. They expressly stated that 'euery byshop and all other persones aforesayde, do dyligently trauayle for the repressing of heresies and notable crimes'.[64] Once again, the attitude to heresy was clearly conceived in terms of the granting or withdrawing of independent episcopal powers concerning the matter, and the bishops were viewed as the jurisdictional chiefs for policing reformation. When looking at the years from 1529 to 1558, the way in which the backing of Catholic doctrine coincided with the granting of exclusive independent anti-heresy powers to bishops, suggests that bishops were figures crucial to the policing of the English Reformation. But, paradoxically, in the propagandist pieces I scrutinise, they were also the figures through which a promotion of Protestant reform could be made. This is because anti-episcopal writing

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61 1 & 2 Philip & Mary, c. 6.
62 i.e. 5 Richard II, c.5; 2 Henry IV, c.15; and 2 Henry V, c.7.
63 Elton, *The Tudor Constitution*, p.410.
64 Quoted from John Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes* (1563), p.924.

depicted the pre-reform power invested in a bishop's office as the core of a persecutory apparatus.

The engagement of Protestant propaganda with heresy statute litigation was made in many books at different points in its evolution.[65] One of the more developed of these, compiled by John Philpot, Archdeacon of Winchester,[66] came towards the end of the period with which I am concerned when English Protestants were faced with the reinstatement of Catholicism under Mary I. It is an example of the way in which Protestant propagandists used a detailed knowledge of the law in conjunction with martyrological discourses to launch an attack on the persecution of ecclesiastical reform. In 1554 John Philpot was indicted and imprisoned both for the views he expressed at the Convocation of the same year and for the publication of an earlier piece of propaganda, *The trew report.*[67] Philpot was then subjected to a series of examinations, first by the Chancellor of Winchester, then by a special King's Bench commission led by Roper, Cholmley, and Story, and later by Edmund Bonner, bishop of London and many other bishops of the realm assembled at Lambeth for this purpose.[68] Philpot kept a careful record of his examinations while in prison and his MSS were later published, edited by John Foxe, as *The examinacion of the constaunt Martir of Christ, John Philpot Archediacon of Winchestre at sondry seasons in the tyme of his sore emprisonment, conuented and bayted, as in these particular tragedies folowyng, it maye (not only to the christen instruction,*

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65 In for example, Simon Fish, *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* ([n.p.: n.pub., 1524 or 1529?]) and Anne Askew, *Examinations,* ed. by John Bale (Marburg [Antwerp: n.pub]., 1546 and 1547), both of which are examined in more detail below.

66 On Philpot as reformer and writer see below, cap. 3.

67 [John Philpot], *The trew report of the dysputacyon had + begone in the conuocacyon hows at london among the clargye there assembled the xviij. daye of October in theyeare of our lord M.D.LJJJJ* (Basel: Alexander Edmonds, [1554]). For a discussion of this see below.

68 According to John Knott in *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.34, Bonner used this examination of Philpot as a kind of showpiece in an attempt to thoroughly denounce the Protestant cause, but as we shall see the propagandist discourses of the Protestants turned such an attempt into something of a blunder.

but also to the mery recracion of the indifferent reader) most manifestly appeare in 1559. Susan Wabuda and others[69] have recognised that Philpot composed his MSS in prison with a view to their immediate publication[70], which supports my assertion that this book was intended as propaganda; but Wabuda, for example, attributes only a vague motive of 'edification' to the intended publication, and mentions nothing of the previous publications that had developed the embedded anagogical narrative and the encoding of the Protestant martyrological posture also used in this piece by Philpot. The intention here is to give a much clearer exposition of what constitutes martyrological discourses, their political targets and the history of their creation.

In auditing his own examination, essentially creating an examination of the bishops, Philpot took issue with the legal authority of his examiners. Philpot clearly made use of his formal legal training at Oxford, before he decided to enter the ministry, to address the issue of the legality of episcopal jurisdiction. At his first examination 'at newgate sessions hall. 2. Octob. 1555'[71] Philpot was being tried before the King's Bench and not an ecclesiastical court. He was asked to answer to charges of separation from the Catholic church (his views on transubstantiation expressed in Convocation) and sedition (the publication of *The true report*). But Philpot concentrated on the legalities of the conduct of the queen's commission in their examinations and refused to answer any charges until these matters had been settled. He accused the commission of acting

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[69] See Susan Wabuda, 'Henry Bull, Miles Coverdale, and the Making of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*', in *Martyrs and Martyrologies: Papers Read at the 1992 Sumer Meeting and the 1993 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. by Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), pp.245-258, 251-2; and the MS by John Louthe 'Reminiscences of John Loude or Louthe, Archdeacon of Nottingham' [Addressed to John Foxe in 1579], in Nichols, John Gough (ed.), *Narratives of the Days of the Reformation, chiefly from the Manuscripts of John Foxe the Martyrologist; with Two Contemporary Biographies of Archbishop Cranmer*, Camden Society LXXVII (London: Camden Society, 1859).

[70] There is an earlier edition of this book: [Philpot, John], *The examinacion of the constaunt Martir of Christ, John Philpot Archediacon of Winchestre* ([n.p.: n.pub., 1556?].

[71] Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.A.ii.[r].

'without all lawe' for several reasons.[72] First he said:

> I desire to knowe, what cause I haue offended in, wherfore I am nowe called before you. And yf I can not be charged with any particular mater done contrarie to the lawes of this realme, I desire your masterships, that I maye haue the benefit of a subiecte, and to be delyuered out of my long wrongful imprisonment, where I haue byen thys twwelue moneth and this halfe, without any callyng to answer before now.[73]

Philpot appealed here to the common law, as shown above, which stipulated that any suspected felon should have a public hearing, a 'quorum' (jury) assessment, to determine the nature of their crime and specify the charges against them before they could be imprisoned. Contrary to this, Philpot said, he had been held by the bishop of Winchester, at this time the arch-conservative Stephen Gardiner, for a year and a half without the benefit of a quorum to determine the charges against him. In answer to this Story said that Philpot was charged with heresy because of his arguments against the Catholic mass in Convocation and in print, but this clearly does not justify his long imprisonment in the custody of the bishop of Winchester. Also, said Philpot, his views on transubstantiation had been expressed in an official debate which had called for them, and that they were made before the nature of the mass had been made Statute, and therefore he could not be charged on this account. There is much to be said for the fairness of this observation by Philpot and his tactic of obmutescence. He had actually made his religious views known and published a book detailing them while the law regarding heresy was, in form, that which existed under Edward VI. As shown above this had restricted the power of bishops to move independent action against individuals over points of religion. But such fine points of law were clearly not regarded as important (indeed could not be regarded as important) as the Marian regime attempted to reverse the gradual Protestantisation of the English church. While Philpot was

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72 Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.A.iii.[r].

73 Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.A.iii.[r].

perfectly within his rights to point up the illegalities practised upon him, it would have be political idealism to expect otherwise in a period when, as I have shown, the structure of the heresy statute was radically altered every few years to accommodate the reigning orthodoxy. Further to this former point, added Philpot, since he had already been examined on the matter by his own ordinary, the bishop of Winchester's chancellor, and since he could not be charged with the same crime twice, he was not compelled to answer the same charges to the bishop of London. In response to this obstinate silence Story announced that Philpot would be committed to the Lollards' Tower which meant that his case would be passed from the magistrate's court to the ecclesiastical court. Philpot then asked to see the commission which had given Story authority to do this, but Story refused to produce it. After a second examination before the commission of the King's Bench Philpot was eventually committed to the 'colehouse' - the infamous prison of the bishop of London. From this point onwards, Philpot was subject to the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical court of the bishop of London.

These seeming finer points of law regarding the authority of his accusers to imprison him were no mere legal quibbles. Philpot's concentration on the jurisdiction of episcopal and secular governors in matters of religion was a powerful propagandist weapon used to denounce what it portrayed as the attempted persecution of Protestantism. In the first part of *The Examination* neither the King's Bench commission nor the episcopal examiners were spared the precision of Philpot's knowledge of his own rights before the law concerning matters of religion. This led into a lengthy and detailed account of his plight once he was eventually submitted to the jurisdiction of Edmund Bonner at

Lambeth: *The Examination* became a detailed Protestant record of the machinery of episcopal jurisdiction as it moved against Protestant leaders in England. Philpot explained why he had recorded his examinations at the hands of the bishop of London and others:

> Because I haue begonne to write vnto you, of myne examinacions before the B. + other, more to satisfie your desire, than it is any thing worthy to be written: I haue thought yt good, to write vnto you also, that which hath ben of late, that the same myght come to light, which they do in darkenes + priuy corners, and that the world nowe + the posteritie herafter might knowe, howe vnorderlye, vniustlye, and vnlearnedlye, these rauening wolues do procede agaynst the sely and faithful flocke of Christ: and condempne and persecute the syncere doctrine of Christ in vs, which they are not hable (by honest meanes) to resyst, but only by tyrannie, and violance.[74]

Here we can see the way in which Philpot's initial bald opposition to the legality of his detention was soon moulded into a narrative that cast him as a victim enthralled by episcopal jurisdiction. As can be seen from this extract, poetically Philpot's narrative created a sense of good against evil, dark against light, sincere piety against false religion. But of still greater interest is the way Philpot bodied forth his position as a manacled captive at the mercy of the Tudor episcopate. By pointing out that his 'examinacions before the B. + other' were conducted in 'darkenes + priuy corners', Philpot suggested to his readers not only the hidden illegalities (repeated by 'vnorderlye' and 'vniustlye') but the evil of the episcopal examiners.

The Bible, and in particular the New Testament, was the touchstone of Protestant piety and ecclesiology, but it also provided a rich fund of poetic material for sixteenth-century authors. As a result of a combination of their study of Hebrew and Latin, and their work as authors, bibliographers, translators and editors - the authors of the texts I look at possessed an intimate knowledge and consciousness of the Bible.[75] Under these circumstances, and

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[74] Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.D.ii.[v]

[75] On the effect of the printing press and tri-lingual studies on scriptural knowledge and interpretation, and the significance of this for piety in the sixteenth century, see 'The scriptural tradition recast: resetting the stage for the Reformation ', in Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an*

in their role as writers of martyrological propaganda, implicit links and explicit reference (by citation or quotation) to scriptural passages were dominant in their texts both as *content* and as *structure*. It is not simply that copious such references can be found in these texts. Their overall form was also clearly orchestrated according to the narrative arrangement of their scriptural models. As will become evident, it was both these factors that made such texts martyrological. In the introduction to his edition of *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot,*[76] Robert Eden remarks that, since the Old Testament comprised by far the largest part of the textbook for the study of Hebrew,[77] students of that language were often drawn to its theology and therefore into a clear understanding of the accretions of the contemporary church. 'It seems to have been in Hebrew', suggests Eden,

> that Philpot made the greatest proficiency; and as the text-book for the study of that language, and almost the only literature it contains, is the Holy Scripture of the old testament, we may conclude that his mind, by continually dwelling upon that sacred book in his cultivation of the language which he admired, gradually opened, under divine guidance, to the true meaning of its contents. And as the old testament is the key to the new, it may thus have happened that his study of the Hebrew language contributed to that enlightened interpretation of the gospel records, which was at once a striking contrast to the darkness of the minds of churchmen in those days, and also, as a reprover of that darkness, the instrument which conducted him to martyrdom.[78]

Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.303-450. On the effects of linguistic studies and humanistic methodology on knowledge and interpretation of the Bible, and the part this played in the Reformation, see, for example: Victoria Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985); James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); R. Gerald Hobbs, 'Hebraica Veritas and Traditio Apostolica: Saint Paul and the Interpretation of the Psalms in the Sixteenth Century', in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by David C. Steinmetz (London: Duke University Press, 1990), pp.83-99; James L. Kugel, 'David the Prophet', in *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp.45-55; and Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *Masters of the Reformation: The Emergence of a New Intellectual Climate in Europe*, trans. by Dennis Martin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). I discuss an associated point - the concerted efforts by Protestant reformers to produce a vernacular Bible in England, and also the determination of episcopal authorities to prevent the realisation of this task - in more detail in Chapter 2.

[76] Rev. Robert Eden (ed.), *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot*, The Parker Society Works of the Fathers and Early Writers of the Reformed English Church Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1842).

[77] As R. Gerald Hobbs remarks in his article 'Hebraica Veritas' in Steinmetz (ed.), *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, the publication of Johannes Reuchlin's influencial Hebrew grammar, *De rudimentis Hebraicis* (Pforzheim: Thomas Ashelm, 1506), is just one indication of the new period of Christian Hebraist exegesis.

Considering the date of Eden's book, his point is well made, and his comment here that Philpot's intimate knowledge and understanding of the New Testament may have inspired his selfless defence of it at the cost of his own life is interesting. But Eden says no more about this. My argument is that first-hand knowledge of the Hebrew and Latin versions of the scriptures was not just a weapon against the perceived anomalies in the sixteenth century church. It provided a ready source of poetic material and divinely authorised texts through which authors could construct powerful martyrological propaganda, striking at, in particular, the Tudor episcopate.

For martyrological propagandists like John Philpot the story at the centre of the New Testament - that of The Passion - provided a source narrative of mythopoetic proportions. The Gospel accounts of the opposition to Jesus' ministry, the conspiracy of the Jewish authorities to destroy him, his betrayal and entrapment, his imprisonment, trials and, finally, his public execution were typological models that gave both full meaning and full significance to the martyrological propagandists' accounts of their own and others' experiences at the hands of the Tudor episcopate. Entwined in the basic narrative of Jesus' ministry and passion is the story of his opponents - the Jewish authorities as embodied in, for example, the Sanhedrin, chief priests, elders and scribes. Although it is difficult to assess the precise status and function of these groups, the Sanhedrin was a secular council of local elite which administered in, for example, census, tax and military affairs. The 'chief' or 'high' priests, like their closest sixteenth-century episcopal equivalents, had great religious and secular power, while elders - as heads of extended families - functioned primarily on the local level as judges, leaders in battle and representatives of their smaller

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78 Eden (ed.), *The Examinations*, p.ii.

communities in larger assemblies.[79] In the New Testament, scribes are not just copyists but, possessing intimate knowledge of the scriptures, they operate as advisors to the authorities and are shown, in the capacity of lawyers, arguing with Jesus over legal matters. In the Gospels and Acts the Sanhedrin court is the locus for opposition (often in collaboration with elders and chief priests) to Jesus' ministry, and the venue where Jesus and his followers make their defence. Sometimes the Sanhedrin and the chief priests occur as synonymous terms.

The groups that opposed Philpot in his various examinations fell into similar categories of status and authority, and - in compiling this martyrological piece - Philpot clearly defined the status of his examiners. This was done, I believe, with the clear intention of anagogically correlating his own situation with that of the opposition to Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels. Thus, implicit in Philpot's text was the notion that his situation and actions bore a relative significance to that of Jesus' ministry and passion. For example Philpot described the panel of his first and second examinations as 'the Quenes commissioners maister Cholmley, maister Roper & D. Storie [who roughly correspond to the Sanhedrin] and one of the *Scribes* of the Arches'[80] (my italics). In his subsequent examinations Philpot was in the hands of the bishops of London, Bath, Worcester, Gloucester, Rochester, Coventry and S^{t} Asaph's (roughly corresponding to the chief priests) and other 'doctors' who operated in a similar advisory capacity to the New Testament scribes. It was this anagogic level of meaning - in particular Christology - that enabled Philpot to portray the

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79 See *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. by Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

80 Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.A.ii.^{r}.

bishops as violent and tyrannous persecutors, the 'rauening wolues'[81] intent upon exterminating the true flock of Christ. For example, when he said

> [t]han the bisshopes rose vp, and comsulted together, and caused a wring to be made, In the which, I thinke my bloude by them was bought and sold, and therto they put to theyr handes, and after this I was caryed to my cole howse agayne,[82]

it was Philpot's christological anagogy that offered the vivid portrayal of the conspiratorial nature of the bishops. Philpot was referring to the way in which the chief priests and elders conspired together and plotted the death of Jesus at several points in the New Testament Gospels.[83] His description of the way in which the bishops presiding over his case consulted over the issues at hand is an example of the way in which the account of Jesus' ministry and passion lent poetic meaning and pietistic significance to the account of his own circumstances. Anagogically the attitudes and gestures of Edmund Bonner and other bishops assembled at Lambeth recalled the rancour of the Jewish leaders and their premeditated opposition to Jesus that eventually resulted in his destruction. Furthermore, Philpot's account of his own plight while mewed by the episcopal courts at Winchester and London, closely followed the Synoptics' narrative of Jesus' predicament. For example, in the Gospel of Matthew, while the Jewish leaders are clearly cast in an unfavourable light and oppose Jesus from the outset of the narrative, it is not until Chapter 12 that the clash concerning the Mosaic Law leads to irreconcilable hostility, and death - conspired by the high priestly authorities - as Jesus' certain fate. Similarly, in *The Examination,* it was Philpot's description of the way in which the bishops presiding over his third examination 'caused a wring to be made' in which his 'bloude by them was bought and sold' that marked the turning point in his

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81 Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.D.ii.^{v}

82 Philpot, *The examinacion* (1556?), sig.D.ii.^{r}.

83 See, for examples, Matthew, 12:15 and 27:1; Mark, 14:1-2; John 11:47-53.

victimisation. Up to this point he had clearly portrayed himself as a manacled defendant, poorly handled by his episcopal oppressors. But from this point forward it is also made clear that his enthrallers have predetermined to dispose of him.

The implicit Christology that lent anagogic meaning and pietistic significance to Philpot's *The Examination*, was present to different extents in all of the texts I probe here. Christology was implicit in the stance of the heroes of these books because they were always shackled by bishops (implicitly high priests or the Sanhedrin). This episcopate, often acting independently of the power of the monarch (tacitly the Roman Governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilate), was depicted in these books as intending to judicially murder its detainees for their presumed incursion into the dominion it had over the church.

After the Last Supper it was Temple police (echoed in the sixteenth-century martyrological texts by bishops or their various officers) who arrested Jesus as he was walking with his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane.[84] Following his arrest, Jesus' first confrontation with the Jewish authorities was not a formal trial but a preliminary investigation, which Reginald H. Fuller suggests was 'more like a grand jury proceeding'.[85] In most cases the heroes of the sixteenth-century martyrological texts I probe - as with Philpot in his *Examination* - also had similar preliminary hearings while in the custody of bishops, but they vehemently opposed such investigations as unlawful and, through the use of anagogy, conspiratorial. But it was this initial examination[86] of Jesus before the high priests that led to his formal citation to appear before the Roman prefect's court under accusation of high treason, where he was

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[84] Mark, 14:43-50 and John 18:1-12.

[85] See Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.359.

[86] Mark, 14:53-64 and John, 18:19-24.

ultimately condemned to death as a messianic pretender. The three synoptic Gospels and John are all highly critical of the priestly party moving independent action against individuals and examining them for heretical opinion. The priests are portrayed generally in an unfavourable light and depicted as having affinity with Satan.[87] Their conspiracies to destroy Jesus in order to preserve their own power have already been mentioned and in Matthew 26:60 and Mark 14:55-60 the priests also have to seek false witnesses to justify their case against him. This aspect of the Gospel narratives was exploited by Philpot and other martyrological propagandists in their own writing. By the use of specific vocabulary, they constructed passages that were paradigmatically linked to portions of the scriptures (Philpot's 'the bisshopes rose vp, and consulted together, and caused a wring to be made, [i]n the which, I thinke my bloude by them was bought and sold' is a good example) to depict the examinations of Protestants by the Tudor episcopate as conspiratorial, lawless and evil. But the shaping of a martyr in these texts took account of the broader teleological nature of the Gospels. Although the malicious and self-interested actions of the high priests against Jesus claimed worldly victory, it is always clear that Jesus is playing for higher stakes. According to the Synoptics, it was Jesus' cleansing of the Temple that provoked the plot against him (Mark 11:18). But John's report of the Sanhedrin meeting (11:47-53) shows that it was a fear of Roman intervention to quell any disturbance of the peace caused by Jesus influence that precipitated the decision to destroy him. However, in both cases it is political expediency, rather than pietistic concern, that motivates Jesus' opponents. Sixteenth-century martyrological propagandists frequently criticised

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87 On this affinity with Satan see, for example, the correlation in Matthew between the pericope describing Jesus' temptation by the devil in the wilderness and that depicting the Jewish leaders' testing of him in 16:1, 19:3 and 22:18 and 35.

the similar priority that their contemporary leaders gave to temporal, rather than spiritual, affairs. In the end the priests' conspiracies in the Bible only serve the greater purpose of the Christian kerygma. While the priestly party was successful in protecting its power and control over the church by using its temporal authority to destroy Jesus, The Resurrection revealed that these endeavours were merely an instrument for the proclamation of Jesus as God's eschatological act of salvation. Thus also, while many of the manacled and condemned sixteenth-century protestants, as depicted in martyrological propaganda, suffered the tyranny of a self-interested and worldly episcopate, their bearing demonstrated a higher purpose. By the tacit limning of scriptural pericopes in accounts of their captivity and victimisation, martyrological authors cast themselves as performing God's will and established that the episcopal authorities were misguided in their accusations of heresy. The following Chapter looks at these theoretical aspects of martyrological writing in greater detail.

The composition by Philpot of the smuggled MSS that later became *The Examination* is a clear example of the centrality of episcopal jurisdiction for policing the course of the English reformation and, in turn, the way in which Protestant reformers conducted their own examination of bishops as a form of propaganda. This text also shows that the changes in the heresy statute, which pre-eminently included the use or relaxation of episcopal jurisdiction over cases of aberrant piety, did not go unnoticed but became an important aspect in presenting bishops' actions against reformers as persecutory.

While Philpot's *Examinacyon* does show the way in which Protestant propagandists concentrated on the heresy statute and upon the authority of

episcopal jurisdiction to state their case, it is really just a morsel of the Protestant anti-episcopal discourses that were developed from the 1520's to the time when Philpot was composing his prison MSS. The following Chapters will uncover further examples and reveal the way in which they functioned as martyrological propaganda in the conflict between English reformers and bishops. While each Chapter charts the creation of a variety of specific martyrological discourses at different points and by different writers, what remains constant is the function and deployment of all of them against English episcopacy. My examination below of what I have identified as specifically anti-episcopal propaganda confirms the evidence of statute law sources that English bishops were prominent figures who, either through their own conservative volition or as instruments of the Crown, policed the course of the English reformation. It then shows how reformers interacted with bishops, and the way in which they developed, in their narratives, postures of mewed and manacled defendants in their campaign to abolish what they believed to be a corrupt form of episcopacy.

But the anti-episcopal propaganda was not merely iconoclastic; it performed a second function too. In their refutation of episcopal practices, all of the texts at which I look made a detailed presentation of Protestant doctrine and ecclesiastical practice. In a sense each text that attacked the bishops and corrupt clergy also replaced them with itself. The books could be kept and studied, perhaps when their readers might otherwise have been expected at the church to hear the parish priest reciting from the authorised liturgical books, or to partake in the State-sanctioned ceremonies. In her recent Ph.D thesis,[88]

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[88] Suzanne Linda Trill, "'Patterns of Piety and Faith': The Role of the Psalms in the Construction of the Exemplary Renaissance Woman" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Liverpool, November 1992). See also Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Private Devotion* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1951).

Suzanne Trill has already shown how scripture was used to educate women throughout the medieval period and that the Book of Psalms in particular was the first discourse through which young women learned to construct their subjectivity. She points out that psalms were appropriated by educationalists to create texts whose ideal readers were exemplary women. However, Trill suggests that, because women were often in control of household management and therefore controlled the administration of religious readings such as the psalms, they occupied a position of power similar to that of the priest. This could be used by those of reforming belief to advance the cause of Protestantism, such as was the case, as John King has identified,[89] with Catharine Parr and her circle. I suggest that my Protestant propagandists took the same advantage and used their books to replace the priests of the unreformed English church. In his argument against the bishops who imprisoned him, as described above, Philpot gave a detailed criticism of the points of Catholic doctrine for which he was indicted and presented a lengthy exposition of the Protestant interpretation, including copious references to the 'early fathers' and Biblical citations, of these same points. All the other authors at which I look used the same technique and some included historical accounts of the European church at various points in its development. In most cases these books were written and published abroad by Protestant exiles, before being smuggled into England through willing mercantile connections. In this

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[89] See John N. King, 'Patronage and Piety: The Influence of Catherine Parr', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp.43-60. In this article King examines a group of pietistic publications, mostly from the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, to show that Catherine Parr (d. 1548), the last wife of Henry VIII, wrote and published works of Reformist tendencies and extended patronage and impetus to the publication of the same by other leading Protestant humanist authors. King also shows that Parr did not work alone but established herself at the head of a group of female patrons such as Anne Seymour, Catherine Brandon, and Mary Fitzroy who patronized the Protestant work and teaching of people like Roger Ascham, John Foxe, John Aylmer and Thomas Wilson.

sense the books can be seen as missionaries by proxy, sent into England as part of the Protestant evangelising campaign when the presence of their authors was simply too dangerous to be viable. Indeed, in many cases, these books suffered burning at the stake, but in this case their authors lived on to send yet more deputies on the same mission. While, in *The Oxford Martyrs,*[90] David Loades identifies the importance of the Henrician and Marian propaganda for the Protestant case against Marian Catholicism, he claims that this initial attack on the English church was only a negative detraction that did not provide any constructive alternatives for rebuilding what they claimed to be the deformed visible church. But the way in which the propaganda texts I examine deputised as Protestant preachers and presented a learned, coherent ecclesiastical system to their readers tends to contradict this distinction by Loades. His assertion, and the acceptance of it by others, that these propaganda pieces served only to discredit the existing church, is perhaps another reason why, up to this point, no attempt has been made to gain a deeper understanding of these texts.

My first Chapter looks at exactly what is meant by discourses of martyrdom. It attempts to clarify some important distinctions that should be made regarding contemporary piety and looks at the way in which Protestant propagandists drew upon these beliefs for moulding the *mien* of the Protestant martyr. My second Chapter looks at the way in which the very early Protestant writers, like William Tyndale and William Barlow began to fashion a previously unidentified anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda that drew upon anti-clericalism. It shows how certain anti-episcopal discursive practices, peculiar to the English situation, came to be forged in order to denounce the

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90 p.45.

Catholic system and celebrate a presbyterian notion of episcopal eldership. Chapter 3 discusses the core of the Protestant propaganda texts: those which concentrated on episcopal visitation and examination practices to dissect and criticise the machinery of English episcopal wealth and jurisdiction. At the heart of these were the early works of George Joye and Robert Barnes, previously unrecognised as anything more than indecorous polemic or used as a source for anecdotal historiography. However, I show that, in laying bare intricate details of the nature of the Tudor episcopal office, these texts essentially rewrote the very meaning of bishop while also creating a platform for the celebration of Protestantism. The fourth and final Chapter deals with a smaller grouping of texts than those in Chapter 3, but no less important for that. These pieces effected their anti-episcopal propaganda by concentrating on the last testaments (the wills) of Protestants who had died at the hands of English bishops. In this way they extolled the Protestant piety of testators who had been unlawfully condemned by an ecclesiastical hierarchy, the primitive state of which, they said, had been deformed by time. The overwhelming aspects of the texts that I look at in the thesis as a whole, but something which has hitherto gone unrecognised, is their episcopal targeting and the coherence of the specifically anti-episcopal martyrological discourses that they deployed as early as the late 1520's, and continued to develop as late as 1558.

Chapter I: Discourses of martyrdom in theory and practice.

Chapter I

Discourses of martyrdom in theory and practice.

In 1589 a short pamphlet entitled *A Countercuffe giuen to Martin Iunior*[1] issued from the press under the pseudonym of 'Pasquill of England'. In it Pasquill addressed the anti-episcopal pamphleteer 'Martin Junior' directly and advised him that:

> *Pasquill* hath posted very dilligently ouer all the Realme, to gather some fruitfull Volume of *THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS*, which Mauger your fiue hundred fauorites shall be printed. There shall you read of that reuerend Elder of your Church, who beeing credited with the stocke of the poore, pertaining to the Bride-well house of *Canterburie*, to sette men a work, was compelled to keepe it to himselfe, because no poore folkes of the houshold of Faith could be found in all that Cittie. There shall you see the life and learning of a Pastor of your Church, which expounding the Articles of our Beliefe in *Deuon-shire*, when he came to handle the descending into Hell, wrote a Latine Letter to a neighbour Minister of his to craue his aduise, and rapt it out lustilie, *Si tu non vis venire mihi, ego volo venire tibi:* and so by the leakes that remaine in his Latine, made more worke for the Tinker, than euer your Father made for the Cooper.[2]

This pamphlet was a direct response to the series of anti-episcopal books, pamphlets and broadsheets known as the Marprelate Tracts that were circulating in London during 1588-1589.[3] However, this passage illustrates how the *Countercuffe* did not make reference to the anti-episcopal Marprelate Tracts as a brief isolated political controversy alone but to broader ideas about

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1 This is generally attributed to Thomas Nashe and appears in *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. by R. B. McKerrow, 5 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), I, pp.57-64, but McKerrow is not convinced of Nashe's authorship; see: V, 55-58 and IV, 42.

2 Anon, *A Countercuffe giuen to Martin Iunior* ([London: n. pub.], 1589), sigs.A.ii.[v] - A.iii.[r].

3 These were written by a Martin Marprelate (pseud.) and attacked the episcopal order of the Elizabethan Church. The seven main tracts were: *Oh read over D. John Bridges, for it is a worthy worke: Or an epitome of the fyrste Booke*, ([East Molesey: R. Waldegrave, October, 1588]), the first in the volley and known as *The Epistle: Oh read over D. John Bridges, for it is a worthy worke: Or an epitome of the fyrste Booke*, ... (Printed on the other hand of some of the Priests) [Fawsley: R. Waldegrave, November 1588], known as *The Epitome; The just censure and reproofe of Martin Junior* [Wolston? 1589?]; the broadside *Certaine Minerall and Metaphisicall Schoolpoints* [Coventry: R. Waldegrave, 20 February 1589]; *Hay any worke for Cooper* [Coventry: R. Waldegrave, March 1589.] *Theses Martinianae* [Wolston: J. Hodgkins, 22 July 1589]); *The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelate* ([Wolston?]: Martin Marprelate, [1589?]). For modern editions and criticism, see also: William Pierce (ed.), *The Marprelate Tracts 1588,1589* (London: James Clark & Co., 1911); *The Marprelate Tracts [1588-1589]* (Leeds: Scolar Press, 1967); William Pierce, *An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts: A Chapter in the Evolution of Religious And Civil Liberty in England* (London: Archibald and Constable, 1908); and Leland H. Carlson, *Martin Marprelate, Gentleman. Master Job Throckmorton Laid Open in His Colors* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1981).

discourses of martyrdom. The author proposed to compile his own collection of 'lives' describing the conduct of members of Marprelate's church, and he gave a few brief examples. His main concern was to refute the martyrological collections upon which Marprelate's church stood, and the martyrological discourses that Marprelate and his predecessors used to oppose the partly reformed - but still episcopal - English church. The martyrological collections of books were important as a tangible reference point, a set of authorities upon which the reformed church was based. The martyrological discourses were continually used to disparage the episcopal office as it existed in its unreformed condition. The *Countercuffe* and other anti-Martinist pieces[4] can only be fully understood if it is acknowledged that their satire is directed against a whole tradition of anti-episcopal propaganda upon which the Martinist writing itself drew.

Pasquill's principal line of attack in this passage is upon a Protestant tradition of martyrological discourses which I shall show were created, developed and extensively used in the propaganda of the English anti-episcopal lobby from the 1520s. The volume of the lives of the saints that Pasquill said was being compiled was intended as a pro-episcopal rebuttal (countercuffe) to the hundreds of anti-episcopal propaganda pieces that were written from the outset of the English Reformation, and that fashioned anti-episcopalian figures as martyrs of the true church. The two members of the presbyterian church that Pasquill mentioned here as intended subjects of his

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[4] The *Countercuffe* was the first in a series of three anti-Martinist pieces known, because of the authorial persona they all adopt as the 'Pasquill Tracts'. It was followed by *The Returne of the renowned Caualiero Pasqvill of England*, (If my breath be so hote that I burne my mouth, suppose I was Printed by Pepper Allie, 1589), and *The First parte of Pasquils Apologie* (Printed where I was, and where I will be readie by the helpe of God and my Muse, to lend you the May-game of Martinisme for an intermedium, betweene the first and seconde part of the Apologie, 1590). The *Second Part of the Apology* and the *Lives of the Saints* - promised in the *Countercuffe* - never made it into print or do not survive.

'fruitfull Volume' were clearly not exemplary figures in the way that canonised representatives of a church should be: his first, the Elder, was corrupt and his second, a Pastor, was ill-educated. The basis of the presbyterian ecclesiastical polity was a non-hierarchical organisation of Doctors, Elders, Pastors, and Deacons. Presbyterians argued that episcopal leadership was not advocated in the Scripture and was a corruption of the true church that would lead many souls to hell. The effect of *The Countercuffe,* then, was to discredit specific members of this presbyterian church as well as the type of book that extolled presbyterian (anti-episcopal) martyrs. But the Pasquill author's satire here was not original. It plagiarised a technique originally created by an earlier generation of *anti-episcopal propagandists* and used to great effect in their numerous publications against the authority and traditions of the English bishops as custodians of the established church. It appears that the author of *The Countercuffe* recognised the power of martyrological books, and attempted to eviscerate the discourse by satirising it. It was reading Nashe's pamphlets and others from the Marprelate Controversy that took me to an earlier period to find out exactly what cultural undercurrent was being referred to in this passage and others like it. This Chapter sets out when and where the discourses of martyrdom were forged and analyses what they constituted. The general anti-episcopal discursive practices were simple but the lay cultural and pietistic traditions upon which they drew, and reformulated for their purpose, were more complex. Discourses of martyrdom were central to the way in which the anti-episcopal propaganda worked, so I want to begin by inquiring into their general form. In order to understand exactly what this tradition and notion of

martyrology was, one has to look to the Protestant anti-episcopal propaganda of the Henrician Reformation as a starting point.

'Discourses of martyrdom' is not my own phrase. It is borrowed from a recent study by John Knott entitled *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694*[5] in which Knott claims that representations of persecution are used in an attempt to forge a notion of Protestant heroic literature. This thesis differs significantly from that of Knott in its approach to the martyrological discourses. To begin with, Knott's whole study is designed to show the way that discourses of martyrdom contributed to the formation of a certain type of literary creation - a Protestant poetics - by authors such as William Prynne, John Bunyan and John Milton. Within this scheme Knott's book envisages John Foxe - because he is the author of the *Actes and Monumentes* - as a 'founding father' in the formulation of such a poetics. Therefore it lays considerable importance upon the position of authors as creators and protagonists. It also depicts the noontide of this Protestant poetics as coming, much later, in the seventeenth century. The authors of the books looked at here, on the contrary, played down authorial importance because their principal message contained theological notions of self-effacement and humility before God. Not only this, but they were all written nearly a century earlier, and, in most cases, before the publication of Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes.* Knott does briefly look at the way in which Foxe was influenced by the martyrological writing of John Bale but only to conclude *a priori* that Bale was 'crucial in forming Foxe's sense of his vocation as a martyrologist'.[6]

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5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

6 Knott, p.46.

This thesis contends that not only Bale, but many other writers earlier than Foxe, were using the idea of martyrdom as a powerful propaganda tool in their arguments in favour of an English Reformation. Martyrology was used and developed by these writers so extensively that, by the time Foxe was compiling his *Actes and Monumentes,* martyrological discourses were already an important part of English religious culture because of Reformation politics. Certainly Foxe would be better described as the compiler rather than the author of the *Actes and Monumentes,* and from the other numerous collections of the lives of Protestant martyrs throughout Reformation Europe it seems clear that an understanding of Protestant martyrology was already firmly established when Foxe started work on his well-known collection.[7] Neither am I concerned with listing antecedents for a preconceived notion of authorial talent, but with the way in which certain discourses of martyrdom were used, *and formulated through,* the sustained attack by English Protestants on the episcopal office. In his 'Introduction' Knott does briefly note the way in which discourses of martyrdom might have emanated from an attempt to oppose punitive measures against Protestants, but he refers only vaguely to the fact that a separatist poetics was formed from 'bold speaking' against 'hostile authorities'.[8] My specific identification of anti-episcopal lobbying as the environment in which martyrological discourses were formulated and developed, concentrates more fixedly on this 'bold speaking' and the constitution of the 'hostile authorities' that it attacked. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 below clearly show that this particular political milieu was responsible for generating martyrological books and pamphlets.

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7 See the 'Introduction', esp. n.21.

8 Knott, pp.7-8

My second contention with Knott's study is that it does not adequately theorise exactly what is meant by 'discourses of martyrdom'. Knott does point out that his study attempts to explain the *agon* that is to be found in martyrological discursive practice.[9] Such 'agon', says Knott, effectively opposed the attempt by authorities to physically inscribe guilt on the body of the punished, and this is an important qualification to the theories of 'power on display' espoused by Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and Elaine Scarry in *The Body in Pain* (1985).[10] While I applaud the caveat to the New Historicist version of bodily inscription - and it is very clear that this was thoroughly subverted in many instances -, Knott's identification of 'agon' as performing this function does require clarification. Part of the answer to this lies in making a clearer distinction between the textual logic in Protestant martyrologies that Knott examines and that of the Catholic hagiographies to which they were opposed. This closer examination of the way in which the texts of the Protestant propagandists functioned to subvert the power of the existing episcopal authority gives a clearer idea of what the discourses of martyrdom were in religio-pietistic terms, as well as identifying the distinctive forms that they took.

The work of theorising how the Protestant discourse of martyrdom functioned is admirably set forth in Catharine Randall Coats' *(Em)bodying the Word: Textual Resurrections in the Martyrological Narratives of Foxe, Crespin, de Beze and d'Aubigne.*[11] Coats' main point is that saints (Catholic) and martyrs (Protestant) are quite different textual creations. If this is correct it seems that

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9 Knott, p.9.

10 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977) and Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

11 Renaissance and Baroque Studies and Texts 4 (New York: Peter Lang, 1992).

the author of the *Countercuffe* either had not read, or had not fully understood, the argument of decades of Protestant writers that had come before him, because they do not write 'LIVES OF SAINTS' at all but rather 'accounts of martyrs'. Either this, or he was being intentionally provocative. But it seems that Catholic and Anglican opponents often failed to see - or, more probably, failed to acknowledge - the subtlety of discourses of martyrdom as well as the power they had for influencing piety. This elision of the posture, that was used in martyrological writing, of being unlawfully yoked by a corrupt and tyrannical episcopate has been inherited by a succession of historians and literary critics down to our own century. Coats makes the important point that a clearer distinction should be made between medieval Catholic hagiography ('lives of saints') and sixteenth-century Protestant martyrology ('acts of martyrs'). Coats points out that in *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (1963),[12] Helen White does not identify the difference between hagiography and martyrology. I would add that, even more recently, in an introduction to a new edition of a central text in the Protestant martyrological tradition - John Bale's *Vocacyon* - John King and Peter Happé talk of 'Protestant saints', which is essentially a contradiction in terms. King and Happé say that in his *Vocacyon*:

> Bale joins the attack against the Catholic separation of the laity from both saints and clergy, to whom are attributed the supernatural powers of working miracles and interceding for the salvation of souls. Like other reformers, he affirms that sanctification is accessible to any elect Christian who testifies or gives witness to faith in Christ, to the point of death if necessary. Protestant saints are seen to remain faithful to the precepts of the "true" apostolic church.[13]

Their point here about a sainthood of all believers is essentially gleaned from the very general message behind Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes*. But they say nothing of the important contextual devices (anti-episcopacy) and references

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12 Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963).

13 *The vocacyon of Johan Bale*, ed. by Peter Happé and John N. King, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies XIV (New York: Renaissance English Text Society, 1990), p.5.

(visitation, examination, imprisonment, and testament) that are required to forge such a message, and this is where new ground must be broken. Anti-episcopal martyrological discourses give us some clue as to how such a message was created. Not only can a difference be seen between Catholic hagiography and Protestant martyrdom, but also different forms of the Protestant martyrological writing can be seen. This shows how highly developed the pro-Protestant discourses, that limned a mien of affliction at the hands of Tudor bishops, were. I agree with Coats about the need for a clearer distinction, and would add that the difference between these two types of writing is crucial to an understanding of the religious and intellectual developments that were invested in the sixteenth-century martyrological writing and, perhaps more importantly, to an understanding of how martyrological textual logic asserted authority over the cultural tradition and existing power of the Roman church. The nature of religious writing completely changed in the sixteenth century because of the developments in Protestant martyrological propaganda.

The *Legenda Aurea,* or *Golden Legend,* is the most well-known collection of medieval Catholic hagiographical accounts. It dates from the thirteenth century, but went through many editions and was widely circulated in incunabula and later editions at the beginning of the sixteenth century.[14] There were also many hundreds of occasional Catholic hagiographical printed accounts in circulation throughout the sixteenth century. The narrative in all of these writings promoted an unreformed Catholic piety with a celebration of such practices as, for example the efficacy of indulgences, the cult of the saints,

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[14] See Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989) and the 'Prologue' to John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

pilgrimages, and purgatory. In *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe* (1989), Roger Chartier et al. have shown that pamphlets and broadsheets deployed hagiographical narratives as propaganda to support, in some cases, the maintenance of the above practices.[15] Chartier's introduction and articles by Chartier and Alain Boureau argue that print generally was used to capture the imagination, and that in many different political campaigns print was one of the materials that was frequently utilised. 'Saints lives', says Chartier:

> were manipulated to justify the power of one group or the claims of another; they were printed to promote a cult, a sanctuary, or a particular pilgrimage; they were used to reinforce the power of a religious congregation, a political party , or a family.[16]

From this he deduces that genres that are often considered to be detached are 'in reality profoundly marked by political aims'.[17] The *Golden Legend* used accounts of saints and miraculous happenings to bolster up belief in the late-medieval Roman Catholic ecclesiastical polity with its demands upon and practices among the people. Similarly, as the sixteenth century progressed and the Protestant Reformation took hold in Europe, Catholic hagiographical narratives were used as propaganda for the Catholic and Counter-Reformations. My concern here is with the Protestant martyrological discourses that opposed this. My findings show that Protestant anti-episcopal books and pamphlets supported a congregation and/or a party. But the technique, the way in which the texts sought to convince, used for these Protestant pieces was new, and came in part from the new theology and in part from humanist learning.[18] It is therefore crucial that the different pietistic

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15 See: Roger Chartier, 'The Hanged Woman Miraculously Saved: An "occasionnel"', in Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print*, pp.59-91; and Alain Boureau, 'Franciscan Piety and Voracity: Uses and Stratagems in the Hagiographic Pamphlet', in Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print*, pp.21-42.

16 Chartier (ed.), p.13.

17 Chartier (ed.), p.13.

18 On such intellectual contributions to the reform movement see, for example: James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford:

implications of the texts of Catholic hagiographers and Protestant martyrologists are not conflated but made distinct.

Early Protestant propagandists had a twofold task. It was not sufficient for them to write accounts of *existing* beliefs or practices. They had to create discourses of martyrdom as rhetorical techniques in support of their political positions, as well as engage in deconstructing the hegemony of the Catholic church. They required a discursive practice that performed both of these functions simultaneously. Anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom accomplished this by presenting accounts of the way in which reformers suffered at the hands of bishops. Such records compared the reformist creed - meticulously supported by scriptural translation and glossing - with the reactionary activities of the contemporary episcopate. Thus, these books simultaneously celebrated and taught reformed religious belief while they attacked the contemporary bishop's office as the mainstay for perpetuating a corrupt church. Detailed examples of this are given in the next three chapters.

John Bale's *Actes of the English Votaryes* (1546) and *Pageant of Popes* (1558) and Robert Barnes' *Vitae Romanorum pontificum* (1545)[19] were intended to discredit the authority of the Pope and the pre-Reformation English church administration. They were essentially disparaging genealogies of the

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Clarendon Press, 1965) and Heiko Augustinus, *Masters of the Reformation: The Emergence of a New Intellectual Climate in Europe*, trans. by Dennis Martin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[19] John Bale, *The Actes of Englysh Votaryes, comprehendynge their vnchast practyses and examples by all ages, from the worldes begynnynge to thys present yeare, collected out of theire owne legendes and chronycles* (Wesel [London: John Day?], 1546); *The first two partes of the Actes, or vnchast examples of the Englysh votaryes,...* (London: Thomas Raynalde [Abraham Vele], 1548 and 1551). The *Pageant of Popes* was first published as *Acta Romanorum Pontificum* (Basel: Oporinus, 1558) and subsequently in another Latin edition in Frankfurt in 1567. It was translated into English by John Studeley and published in London in 1574. Robert Barnes' *Vitae Romanorum pontificum ... collectae, per D. R. Barns ... Eiusdem Sententiae, siue praecipui Christianae religionis articuli, ...* (Basile: [n. pub, 1555]) was published in a 1545 German edition bound with another piece: *Bapst trew Hadriani iiij. vnd Alexanders III. gegen Keyser Friderichen Barbarossa gebt. Aus der Historia [i.e. the Vitae Romanorum Poutificum of R. Barnes] zusamen gezogen ... Mit einer Vorrhede D. M. Luthers.* On this genre see: Ruth Chavasse, 'The reception of humanist historiography in northern Europe: M. A. Sabellico and John Jewel', *Renaissance Studies* 2:2 (1988), 327-338.

Roman Catholic church which examined the way in which successive leaders of the church had corrupted its primitive state to further their worldly ambitions. Their conclusions were drawn from exegesis of the Bible and an examination of ecclesiastical documentary evidence from monastic holdings. It was the reformers' research of monastic library holdings that underpinned their own interpretation of Catholic collections of saints' lives. This amounted to a refutation of their historical accuracy and theological credibility. Indeed Bale, Barnes and others clearly stated that the Catholic 'legends' were counterfeit superstitions intended only as a means to mask the political corruption of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

Since the authors of Protestant martyrological discourses, then, were intent on actively highlighting the difference between Catholic hagiography and Protestant martyrdom, Coats' (op.cit.) observations on the need for clarification seem apposite. Sixteenth century writers that deployed discourses of martyrdom in texts that were intended to support Protestant reform, often took pains to refute charges of merely opposing Catholic hagiographical collections with their own lists of saints, and indeed there is a crucial difference. This stems from the different doctrinal positions. Martyrologists were clearly misunderstood by some, who either did not read their books, failed to understand Protestant theology or refused to accept it. Martyrological propagandists did make a convincing refutation against charges of a counter-hagiography, so to ignore the difference between Catholic hagiography and Protestant martyrology would be to miss the main point and design of Protestant discourses of martyrdom.

Coats points out that while hagiographies 'seek to venerate or canonise saints, their bodies, fragments of their bodies, or relics as containers of divine presence'[20], the Protestant martyr 'is not a zone to dispense power, but rather a person to be *read*, and through reading, to come to know God'.[21] She says that the textual logic of martyrological writing sets out to create a redemptive palimpsest of the body'[22] rather than - as in the textual operation of hagiography - 'to recuperate and safeguard the body as a sacred object of contemplation'.[23] So while it must be observed that martyrological texts must still make some reference to the bodies of their subjects this is only part of a process whereby those bodies are temporary vessels and ciphers through which the reader can understand the Word of God. Coats here is referring to dead bodies, but I suggest that the same process was achieved with imprisoned bodies or bodies suffering under the yoke of episcopal jurisdiction. The occasions of bodies doomed by episcopal citation or incarcerated in episcopal gaols were as ripe for the revelation of scripture as bodies that had suffered execution. As my Chapter on visitation and examination shows, there were many anti-episcopal books that created an unshackled palimpset from the bodies of immured reformers.

Following Coats' comparison, previously the textual operation employed by Catholic hagiographers was one that created around the body of each saint a supernatural power. The redemptive nature of each saint lay not in the godly words that he or she had expressed but in his or her very limbs, in relics to which pilgrimage should be made in order to benefit from their aura. Coats clearly shows that in the two corpuses of writing lie very different intellectual

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20 Coats, *Embodying the Word*, p.5.
21 Coats, p.6.
22 Coats, p.2.
23 Coats, p.3.

traditions. For hagiographers the sacred aura of the body of each saint and the immediate space around it is important, whereas for martyrologists 'the phenomenon of verbal intellectual memory - is the predominant trait'.[24] She explains that hagiographical texts create saints that display 'artifact[s] that [are] meant to be seen'[25] while martyrologies create martyrs that 'speak... a word that is meant to be heard'.[26] This idea is illustrated from an extract that Coats herself gives from Foxe's account of the martyr John Randall in the *Actes and Monumentes:*

> This John Randall being a young scholar in Christ's college... for the love of the Scripture and sincere religion, he began not only to be suspect but also hated... his study door being broken open... the young man was found [hanged] in such sort and manner that he had his face looking upon the Bible, and his finger pointing to a place of Scripture, wherein predestination was treated of.[27]

Here Randall's body is only important as a vessel that can point the reader to the Scripture, to the Word of God concerning a central Protestant doctrine. The narrative is such that it directs the reader's attention immediately away from the hanged body of Randall to an open Bible and as Coats remarks 'the book [*Actes and Monumentes*] here is figured as a mediating entity between the body and the Word that he [John Randall] once read and that the reader now reads, symbolising the purpose of the *Actes'*.[28]

But, as I have pointed out, Foxe was neither the creator nor the sole exponent of this process whereby the deeds and words of condemned Protestants were reified into signs that clearly directed readers to the scripture. In the wake of the draconian penalties of the Act of Six Articles (1539), George Joye, for example, in his *A present consolacion for the sufferers of persecucion for ryghtwysenes* (1544)[29] gave five consolations for suffering the death penalty

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24 Coats, p.11.

25 Coats, p.12.

26 Coats, p.12. A comparison of the Chartier hagiographies with Fox MSS highlights all these differences explained by Coats.

27 Quoted from John Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes* (VIII, 694) in Coats, op. cit, pp.53-4.

28 Coats, p.54.

in the cause of reform, all of which made the same reference to the word of God rather than to any liminal aura. In this text Joye asserted that the result of suffering was that the Word of God is preached, and indeed there is a lengthy introduction that gives a detailed account of the activities of bishops Longland, West, and Stokesley to thwart the distribution of the vernacular New Testament in England. Joye offered this result as in itself a consolation and boldly says 'the more affliccion and persecucion the worde of the crosse bringeth to vs, the more felicite and greter ioye abideth vs in heuen'.[30] Here 'the cross' (literally of Christ and metaphorically of contemporary reformers burnt for heresy) was not a sacred symbol *per se* but metonymically linked to 'the worde' and throughout the point was very clear that bodily suffering does not create a sacred aura around relics but signifies the celebration of 'the gospel'. John Bale's *A Soveraigne Cordial For a Christian Conscience* (1554)[31] offered similar consolations for imprisoned reformers and makes exactly the same metonymic link between bodily suffering and the scripture, this time during the *volte face* to Catholicism upon the accession of Mary I. 'Be not afraid', said Bale, 'at these most perilous daies, wherein... the prince of darknes is broken loose, and rageth ... against the elect of God' because to suffer for Christ is essentially a joy.[32] 'Be not afraid', he repeated, 'therfore of the bodely death, for your names are written in the booke of life'.[33] Here like the Randall woodcut and Joye's *Consolacion* liminal abuse pointed directly to the scripture ('the booke of life'). And this happens literally in Bale's text too as copious marginal annotations to

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29 ([n.p.: n.pub.], September, 1544).
30 Joye, *A present consolacion*, sig. B.iiii.^{r}
31 (Roane[Rome]: n.pub., 1554).
32 Bale, *Cordial*, sig.A.ii.^{r}.
33 Bale, *Cordial*, sig. A.ii.^{v}.

this passage directed the reader's attention to scriptural examples of bodily persecution.

Perhaps one of the most well-known utterances of one of the martyrs on the threshold of his own execution by burning is that of Hugh Latimer. Burnt during the Marian persecution alongside Nicholas Ridley in the dry ditch outside the walls of Oxford on 16 October 1555, just before the lighting of the faggots Latimer said: 'Be of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as shall never be put out'.[34] Similar to Foxe's narration of the death of Randall and similar to the exhortations of Joye and Bale, here Latimer's words revealed the belief that the martyr's body was a cipher - in this case a source of light engendered by the will of God for others to follow - that functioned solely as a route to the revelation and understanding of God. According to Latimer's words his and Ridley's executions were not the just results of heretical opinion. On the contrary it was the will (grace) of God that they would perform some form of holy apocalypse.[35]

The martyrdom of Protestants also functioned anagogically by making reference to the execution of Christ. But the significance of the deaths of these martyrs was clearly not identical to the Crucifixion. In Matthew 26:28, the death of Jesus at the hands of the high priests is not the occasion of his destruction but the means whereby God accomplishes the salvation of all humankind. This understanding of the crucifixion of Jesus provided a mythopoetic narrative which captive or condemned Protestants used to define their own positions as martyrs. But, while Jesus was a vessel through which God's salvation of

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34 Quoted from David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992).

35 In *The Oxford Martyrs*, David Loades notes that at least one catholic named Julius Palmer (a Fellow of Magdalene College) 'was converted outright by the spectacle and was later himself burned as a heretic' (p.219).

humanity could be effected, the sixteenth-century martyrs were the vehicles of deiform prophecies - revelations which, at the very least, directed spectators to the scriptures and the scriptural equivalents of their own predicament. Therefore, it was not so much that the heroes of anti-episcopal Protestant martyrologies fashioned themselves as Christ-like figures but that they limned their predicament - by the use of christological scripturalism - as an event on the same level of significance as that of Jesus' execution. In this way they demonstrated how their situation was a vehicle for the facilitation of godly disclosure. The fact of the martyrs' persecution - whether by imprisonment, examination or, ultimately, being burnt alive - was not important in itself as far as scriptural typology was concerned. It merely operated as a cipher whereby the Divine Will was revealed.

A further essential quality inherent in this diversion of attention from corporeal affliction and destruction to scriptural illumination - by the actions of proscribed prisoners and propagandist writing about them - was its a-institutional or anti-institutional nature. In the case of all the texts I probe in this thesis, the institution in question was that of episcopacy. Caroline Walker Bynum's collection of essays, which discusses the substance and social significance of women's piety from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries,[36] in many ways validates the theoretical framework of Protestant martyrological fashioning laid out in Coats' *Embodying the Word.* But it also provides an important paradigm of the link between a-institutional or anti-institutional pietistic practices and the notion of the human body as instrumental in producing deiform prophecy. Furthermore, Bynum's essays convincingly

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36 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992).

suggest that there could have been some continuity of belief from the religious form of medieval female asceticism to sixteenth-century Protestant oppositional groups. 'My final conclusion therefore is to argue', says Bynum at the close of her re-evaluation of the religious typologies defined by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch,[37] 'that sociologists who wish to understand the massive changes in religion, society and economic life in the sixteenth century need to take the later Middle Ages more seriously'.[38] 'The religiosity of medieval women', she adds, '... is a distinct socioreligious type that needs to be explored as background to the Reformation'.[39] As Bynum's analysis of the Weberian and Troeltschian typologies in the light of more extensive research shows, and as my inspection of anti-episcopacy and the fashioning of martyrology reveals, her claim is well founded.

While there are clearly fundamental differences between the religious beliefs of the medieval women discussed by Bynum and the sixteenth-century Protestants discussed here, several aspects of the earlier pietistic practices appeared as facets central to the power and efficacy of the later anti-episcopal and martyrological stance. Therefore, Bynum's observation that:

> The Reformation both continued and rejected the female piety of the late Middle Ages. What is certain is that the relationship needs to be studied...[40]

is instructive. The medieval women that Bynum identifies as mystics and ascetics are similar to sixteenth-century Protestant martyrs in their a-institutional positioning, their emulation of and references to Christian teaching in the New Testament (including, particularly, the idea that Christ's

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37 See Max Weber, *Economy and Society,* ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 3 vols. (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968) and *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* trans. by Talcott Parsons and intro. by Anthony Giddens (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991; first pub. 1930); Ernst Troeltsch, *Protestantism and Progress* (London: Fortress, 1986) and *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches,* trans. by Olive Wyon, 2 vols. (New York: Harper, 1960; first pub. 1930).

38 Bynum, p.77.

39 Bynum, p.77.

40 Bynum, p.78.

adversity and death on the cross was a saving act), their rejection of priestly authority, and their understanding of how their own bodies could serve as vessels for the saving work of God.

In her discussion of Troeltsch's tripartite division of religious practices into Churchly, Sectarian or Mystical, Bynum finds that 'miracles and visions of female virtuosi often implicitly undercut the sacramental power of the clergy',[41] that 'women's miracles emphasized the virtue of women who receive and sometimes implied that priests were unnecessary'[42] and that these female virtuosi 'felt the law of God to be an immediate and absolute command and rejected complex stages toward God and levels of mediation between earth and heaven'.[43] These observations have two important implications for this thesis. Chapter 2 shows how sixteenth-century Protestant propaganda similarly subverted the orthodox religious institution and refined such subversion ultimately into a denunciation of the Tudor form of episcopacy. I also argue at various points in the thesis how the gap created by the removal of orthodox priestly authority was replaced by the scriptural exegesis of the texts themselves and the constant reference to Biblical authority and New Testament pericopes. This reference to the Bible was implicitly made by anagogically correlating the plight of sixteenth-century Protestants at the hands of bishops with those of Christ at the hands of the high priests and by using the body in *imitatio Christi* to direct spectators and readers to scriptural revelation.

Bynum understands the pietistic practises of medieval women as performing essentially the same function when she observes:

> From Mary of Oignies to Catherine of Siena and Joan of Arc, holy women saw themselves as acting - not merely as suffering - in *imitatio Christi;* indeed, in their own view, suffering *was* acting and vice versa.[44]

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41 Bynum, p.61.
42 Bynum, pp.61-2.
43 Bynum, p.62.

And Bynum's differentiation between acting and suffering is an important point, related to the notion of the body functioning as a salvific vessel. One of the main claims Bynum makes in this essay is for the 'active nature of women's piety'.[45] She feels that the concentration by scholars on the extravagant and self-punishing actions of these women has obscured the true salvific significance of their actions. In her attempt to free further research on female medieval piety from the Troeltschian categories of churchly, sectarian and mystical, Bynum explains in more detail how mental and physical suffering in these women was not merely an individualistic mystical experience, but an action that was designed to serve others in various ways. To begin with, she points out that, while it is true that there are many instances of mystical experiences in her subjects, they were also charitably active in the community. 'Lindwina of Schiedam', says Bynum,

> languished paralyzed on her bed. Catherine of Siena withdrew for several years into her bedroom and starved herself to death. Lutgard of Aywières was so afraid of human contact that she asked to have her gift of healing touch taken away. These women (and many others) afflicted their bodies in world-denial and sought, in considerable frenzy, the ecstasy of mystical union. But they all served their neighbors quite actively - Lidwina by almost constant feeding of the poor; Catherine by miraculous cures, by berating the clergy and even by dabbling in papal politics; Lutgard by the very curing she rejected and by her long fasts which propitiated God for the depredations of heretics. Most medieval holy women ... understood the meaning of their lives to be such a profound combination of action and contemplation that the contrast between the categories vanishes.[46]

This does suggest a tendency to participate and serve in the community rather than withdraw completely from it.[47] For Bynum it is evident that, while ascetic suffering was 'ecstatic, glorious, pleasurable union' with the suffering Christ experienced during his Passion, because it could substitute for - and therefore

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44 Bynum, p.54.

45 Bynum, p.54.

46 Bynum, p.69.

47 Bynum gives a further important example of the way in which personal suffering was a charitable in an account from the life of the thirteenth-century Flemish saint Ida of Louvain on pp.71-2.

reduce - penitents' time in purgatory, it was also a service to others. Thus she concludes that:

> medieval women combined world-rejecting asceticism with world-fleeing mysticism. But, in the final analysis, women's piety was also innerworldly asceticism - that is, asceticism turned toward the world not just to accept it but to serve it and direct it to virtue as well.[48]

So, as Bynum says, '*being* a vessel to a medieval person, meant being active'.[49] Whether awaiting examination or already condemned as heretics, for sixteenth-century episcopal detainees, and their Protestant martyrologists, their affliction and somatic death was not involved in actively serving penitent souls in purgatory, nor in any of the other eclectic charitable acts that medieval women's fleshly torment enabled. As active vessels, the bodies of sixteenth-century Protestant martyrs, as presented in the texts about them, served the single purpose of directing the reader's attention to the scriptures. In turn this served further purposes such as the refutation and denunciation of Catholic doctrine and institutions (including Tudor episcopacy), a witnessing of the crucial importance for Christian piety of the salvific function of Christ's tribulation on the cross, and the instruction of readers in points of the Protestant creed and ecclesiology as a refutation of the words of the official church that issued from its pulpits.

In spite of the fact that the political contexts and doctrinal beliefs of medieval women and sixteenth-century Protestants were quite different, the theory of the former that the human body could participate directly in the divine order was remarkably similar to the latter. The fact that, in both cases, the understanding that the body could in some way serve fellow Christians was motivated by a-institutional or anti-institutional behaviour is of particular interest. In both cases the subversion of ecclesiological authority was effected through

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48 Bynum, p.70.

49 Bynum, p.71.

somatic adversity. It is clear that Coats' notion of the Protestant martyr's body as a redemptive palimpsest and Bynum's assertion that a-institutional female piety in the medieval period understood corporeal affliction as a charitable act are theoretically related. Comprehending these theories, what the modern reader witnesses in the sixteenth-century martyrological texts is the attempt at creating an a-institutional intellectual culture that gave authority to Protestants in spite of their being cited, examined, immured, anathematised or hereticated by the official church.

Coats explains that the aim of her book is to 'discern and elucidate those strategies by which a new form of writing, uniquely and militantly Calvinist, came into being'[50] and she does this through an examination of martyrologies by John Foxe, Jean Crespin, Théodore de Bèze and Agrippa D'Aubigné. In doing this Coats' book essentially sets out to theorise one particular aspect of sixteenth-century intellectual history - an aspect of the developing Protestant-humanist concept of writing and reading. While I see great value in the way Coats concentrates on theorising the difference between Catholic hagiography and Protestant martyrology as outlined above, there are similarities between the scheme and chronology of Coats and Knott with which I take issue. Unlike Knott's *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature,* Coats' book is not so concerned with justifying a claim for charismatic authors, but it does convey a similar notion that *second generation* reformers, writing predominantly later in the second half of the sixteenth century, were responsible for formulating martyrological discourses.[51] The book also only

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50 Coats, p.10.

51 As far as I can tell, this is true of all work today on Protestant martyrology. I have already pointed out the way in which John Knott's *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and David Loades' *The Oxford Martyrs* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992) both suggest that martyrological discourses began with Foxe and his contemporaries during the reign of Mary I, but there are many other studies on this subject that also fail

refers to a rather abstract idea of a Calvinist form of creative writing ('a new form of writing, uniquely and militantly Calvinist, came into being'). While I argue for a uniquely Protestant form of writing, it is not a form simply because it is based on a creed. Anti-episcopal martyrological writing is also a rendition of what happened when reformers met bishops in their palaces, courtrooms and gaols, or on the scaffold.

It is both these points that I clarify in this thesis, first by showing a clearly defined martyrological textual practice *as anti-episcopal propaganda* in books and pamphlets by first generation English reformers as early as the 1520s, and second by pointing up the importance of the anti-episcopal lobby in the formation of these discourses of martyrdom. When the martyrologies are understood not as 'works of art' alone nor as exclusively pietistic creations but as carefully crafted weapons in a complex ideological battle, the techniques and discourses such texts use become much clearer. I view the books that both Knott and Coats discuss, and many others predating these, not as items that can be grouped together to form some kind of aesthetic tradition but as texts of propaganda specifically designed to intervene in English political discussions about the episcopal office. From this it becomes evident that the political problem of episcopal authority in England was a major contributor to the formulation of discourses of martyrdom, and this is something that hitherto has not been acknowledged at all. In *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: the Struggle for a Reformed Church*[52] Patrick Collinson does broaden the initiative for

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to explain its previous existence and how, therefore, it was already familiar to their audiences. For examples see: William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963); Norman L. Jones, 'Matthew Parker, John Bale, and the Magdeburg Centuriators', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12:3 (1981), 35-49; Catharine Davies, and Jane Facey, 'A Reformation Dilemma: John Foxe and the Problem of Discipline', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:1 (Jan. 1988), 37-65, and *Martyrs and Martyrologies: Papers Read at the 1992 Summer Meeting and the 1993 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. by Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), especially articles by Jane E. A. Dawson, Susan Wabuda and David Loades.

creating Protestant martyrologies beyond John Foxe alone by referring to a group of archivists under the direction of Grindal, and in her article 'Henry Bull, Miles Coverdale, and the Making of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*',[53] Susan Wabuda provides more material to support this claim by concentrating on the correspondence surrounding the compilation work of Miles Coverdale and Henry Bull. But neither of these studies takes such compilation work back into the 1520s nor do they link such work to anti-episcopacy or examine how martyrological discourses were formed within a propaganda enterprise.

Before I look at exactly how and why the discourses of martyrdom were forged by the first generation reformers, I want to show that such discourses were indeed powerful as propaganda and a cause of great concern to the episcopal authorities. First I will show examples of episcopal anxiety, and then I will show that the propaganda effects were the result of a concerted campaign to forge and refine texts that denigrated contemporary episcopal jurisdiction.

In the introduction to *The Oxford Martyrs*, David Loades points out that the power of certain books that used discourses of martyrdom - although he does not use this phrase - to win popular opinion for the Protestant suit during the Marian persecution was a cause of great anxiety to the authorities. He shows how Catholic pamphleteers like Miles Huggarde and John Christopherson were aware of the power of Protestant martyrological writing because they were employed to discredit its claims in polemical pieces of their own.[54] Loades quotes Huggarde's comment about Protestant martyrological

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52 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), pp.79-82.

53 Susan Wabuda, 'Henry Bull, Miles Coverdale, and the Making of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*', in *Martyrs and Martyrologies: Papers Read at the 1992 Summer Meeting and the 1993 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. by Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), pp.245-258.

54 See, for example Miles Huggarde, *The displaying of the protestantes* (London: [n.pub], 1556) and John Christopherson, *An exhortation to alle menne to take hede and beware of rebellion* (London: [n.pub], 1554).

writing in *The displaying of the Protestantes* - '... this is their prose', says Huggarde,

> We allege, preach, utter or talk of nothing but scripture, which cannot deceive us whereby we are the true church and not you which call yourselves catholics.
> ... But if these good fellows will needs be of Christ's church, as arrogantly they presume by their own confession; They must have one unity of doctrine as the church hath, which surely they have not[55] -

and later in a footnote concerning John Christopherson's reference to 'false stinking martyrs' in *An exhortation to alle menne to take hede and beware of rebellion,* Loades observes how such pieces 'attacked particularly the attitude of injured sanctity which the protestant prisoners were already managing to convey to the public at large'.[56] But, while he mentions a 'growing' Protestant mythology in the mid-1550s, Loades' term is not specific and he writes that even at this point (1554/5) it was 'unformulated'.[57] I identify more specifically what the mythology was and argue for a relatively well-established form by this time.

In a querester's Childermas Day sermon at Gloucester,[58] dated 1558, similar attempts were made to discredit the claims of discourses of martyrdom. The authorship of the sermon is ascribed to Richard Ramsey who was rector of Shennington, Gloucester from 1555 until his deprivation at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign in 1559.[59] The sermon concentrates exclusively on discrediting the claims of 'favorars' of Protestants executed under Mary that the latters' deaths are martyrdoms in the name of Christ and will consequently receive the 'thankes of God'. The sermon uses the notion of innocence as a litmus test for identifying true faith. It reads:

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55 Quoted from David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992), p.23.

56 *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.31.

57 *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.31.

58 Cotton MS., Vespasian A. xv., pp.173-179. This sermon was presented by a 'boy bishop' (episcopus puerorum) as part of a popular festival. On this festival and its sermons see the 'Conclusion' below.

59 Ramsey's installation in 1555 and deprivation in 1559 may be considered evidence of his pro-Catholic sympathies.

> ...a malefactor that suffreth not innocently, but for his own gilt and deservyng, is worthy that he suffreth, saith S. Peter, and he byds such to be content, and to loke for no thankes of God at all.
>
> And so, by this reason of S. Peter, it is evident that thei are far wyde of true martirdom, and consequently of the kyngdom too, which suffryd violence of fyre, hangyng, headyng, banysshyng, or other just execution, for many and divers enormities in ther faith and maners, allthough, in the opinion of ther favorars, thei are taken for very holy martyrs only for ther pretendyd good quarell and for ther patient suffryng, lackyng the commendacion of inocency, which unto martirdom, as I said, is a vertue most necessary: so necessary that withowt it ther is no perfitt charity, withowt the which no cause, no payne, no pacience, no quarell, no, not the quarell of faith and Christ, avayleth or profiteth to the title of martyrdom, or to the title of the kyngdom. This is not my judgement, but S. Augustine's in his boke *De fide, ad Petrum.*[60]

The sermon declares that, according to the Petrine and Augustinian precept of 'innocence', four executed Protestants were justly condemned for 'divers enormities'. It argues against martyrological discursive practices, which had suggested that the patient suffering of these four for the 'faith of Christ' was a sign of their being Christian martyrs, by saying that this is a 'pretensyd good quarell'. Although the sermon goes on to quote numerous examples of 'innocents' that suffered 'true' martyrdom it never defines exactly what properties make an innocent (true) faith, and therfore never sufficiently engages with the logic of the Protestant martyrological pamphlets that it attacks. Nevertheless, this sermon is an attempt to frustate execution propaganda - circulated during and immediately after the performance of the death penalty - that had sought to rally support for the pietistic credentials of those who it protrayed as victims of persectuion.

This specific opposition to martyrological writing during the reign of Mary is not only evidence that it played a significant role in maintaining the claims of the Protestant church, but also that it was in frequent use and well-established by 1553-8. Previously such material as this by Christopherson, Huggarde and Ramsey, and the martyrological writings to which it was opposed, has only

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[60] Quoted from John Gough Nichols (ed.), *Two Sermons Preached by the Boy Bishop at St Paul's, Temp. Henry VIII, [sic]and at Gloucester, Temp. Mary,* intro. by Edward Rimbault, The Camden Miscellany VII (London: Camden Society, 1875 (pp.17-18).

been discussed as it relates to issues of the Marian period, and without any sense of it having a formative history. If the preoccupation of these Catholic/Marian apologists - both in the pulpit and in print - is anything to go by, anti-episcopal martyrology had certainly managed to convey a sense of Protestant sanctity through its printed discursive practices. This thesis identifies the fact that such powerful discourses were developed in the preceding decades, and shows that they were not merely anti-Marian pieces (as suggested by Loades in *The Oxford Martyrs*) but a direct result of practices and propaganda that had opposed English episcopacy since 1520.

At the end of Henry VIII's reign, almost a decade before Huggarde and Christopherson were faced with the task of denouncing Protestant discourses of martyrdom, John Ponet's translation of Bernardino Ochino's *Tragoedie* (1549)[61] had already presented a clear description of how Protestant martyrology functioned, and a suggestion that the authorities it opposed were already well aware of its influence. As the title-page stated, the *Tragoedie* was 'translated out of the Latine into Englyshe by Master John Ponet Doctor of Diuinitie' and, at the time it was issued from the Protestant press of Gwalter Lynne, had 'neuer [been] printed before in any language'. Ochino was a prominent reformist leader. He had arrived in England with Peter Martyr in 1547 at the invitation of Cranmer. Received under the hospitable roof of Lambeth palace, he was appointed preacher to the Italian church, given a non-residentiary prebend in the church of Canterbury in 1548, and granted a crown pension of 100 marks. Ochino was not only an exile from his native Italy for most of his life but even ran into trouble with Reformed authorities: he was banished from the territory of Zurich in 1563 for his views on the Eucharist, was

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61 Bernardine Ochino, *A Tragoedie*, trans. by John Ponet (London: Gwalter Lynne, 1549).

refused asylum in Basel and was banished from Poland in 1564. It can be assumed therefore that he would have been closely in touch with the culture of reform and its propaganda. John Ponet was an energetic Protestant reformer and his activities as bishop of Rochester under Edward VI are discussed below in Chaper 2. Ponet's awareness of the need for printed Protestant apologetics is partly revealed by this translation of Ochino's Latin MS of the *Tragoedie*, and there is further evidence of his direct involvement in writing and encouraging the production of similar pieces in a letter of his to John Bale, composed when both of them had been forced into exile after the accession of Mary I, discussed below in Chapter 3.

In the opening dialogue of the *Tragoedie,* Lucifer was painfully aware of the power of discourses of martyrdom. It was the words of the Catholic bishops - responsible, as they were, for examining, mewing and condemning Protestants - (and their defenders) that were mockingly voiced through the character of Lucifer in the *Trageodie.* 'Yf we attempte to oppresse the members of Christe with persecucion and tirrannye', he said,

> we shall that waye but increase more and more our owne sorow. For as we be sufficiently taught by longe experience, they bee so persed and led with a zeale to ye glorye of god, and so carried with a vehement heuenly spirit, that they contempne all thinge sauinge Christ onely. And this one thing semeth much to be maruailed at, that whan they be soiled for ye glory of Christ, or banished into exile, or lose their honour, their contrey, their substaunce, yea or their lyfe also, yet they earnestlye triumphe and be merye, and they esteme it as a game wonne, and a ioyfull victorie, to suffer all kyndes of misfortune for Christes sake, so that ye more sorow we doe unto them, the more glorious + famous they be, and we remayne in more misery and confusion.[62]

Lucifer's complaints to Beelzebub in this passage perceptively prefigured the way in which the later champions of the Marian constitution, both in print (Huggarde and Christopherson) and from the pulpit (Ramsey), attempted to denounce the pervasive fashioning of Protestant heroes through the production of martyrological texts. His lament shows an acute awareness of the effect that

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62 *A Tragoedie*, sigs.A.iii.^{v}-A.iv.^{r}.

creating martyrs out of heretics ('... they esteme it as a game wonne, and a ioyfull victorie, to suffer all kyndes of misfortune for Christes sake') could have for recruiting allegiance ('... ye more sorow we doe unto them, the more glorious + famous they be'). Furthermore, it was not just loss of life at the stake that distinguished a martyr. Here, Lucifer included several different circumstances that indicated a Christian martyr's vocation, including citation or accusation ('soiled for ye glory of Christ'), exile ('banished into exile'), and public proscription or imprisonment ('lose their honour, ..., their substaunce'). As the texts that I analyse in this thesis reveal, anti-episcopal martyrologies indeed exploited all of these situations in shaping their figures into Protestant martyrs. The casting of episcopally cited, examined, immured or hereticated Protestants as manacled defendants of the Christian church, yoked under the tyranny of unenlightened Tudor bishops, refused to sanction sixteenth-century Protestantism as heresy. In fact its discursive practice turned a heretic into a 'true Christian' for its readers, and Lucifer's frustration with the success of this technique - like that of his episcopal placemen and their supporters - is clearly disclosed here in the *Tragoedie*. The words spoken to Beelzebub here, represent not only those of Lucifer himself, but also the type of disquietude that any unreformed bishop or other prominent church official might express in response to Protestant martyrological propaganda.

In the *Tragoedie* Lucifer was perfectly confident that he could manipulate the leaders of the official church (bishops) in order to make:

> a certaine newe kingdome replenished with idolatry, supersticion, ignoraunce, error, falsehode, deceit, compulsion, extorsion, treason, contencion, discorde, tiranny, and crueltie, with spoyling, murder, ambicion, filthines, iniuries, factions, sectes, wickednes, and mischiefe, in the which kingdome all kyndes of abhominacion shalbe committed.[63]

63 *A Tragoedie*, sig. A.iv.^{v}.

'[A]lthough the principall heades of thys kyngdome be full of darkenes, of ignoraunce, of heresie, errour, fraude, and lyes', he claimed,

> yet shall they shamelesly take vpon them the vsurpacion of authoritie to make newe and wicked articles of the fayth, wresting the holy scriptures to their croked purpose.

'For I can easely persuade vnto them', he continued to maintain, 'that their churche is the churche of Christ, although it be nothing elles in dede, but a very assembly of Satan'.[64] But in the *Tragoedie* it was Lucifer who was ultimately being manipulated. Despite his gloating relish at being able to promote a church in which 'all kyndes of abhominacion shalbe committed', Lucifer's words ultimately served to denounce those unenlightened Tudor bishops who endeavoured to anathematize Protestants ('attempte[d] to oppresse the members of Christe with persecucion and tirrannye'). Since Lucifer intended to use bishops ('principall heades') to create and maintain a 'very assembly of Satan', all episcopal actions against figures that martyrological discourses moulded into 'the members of Christe', were exposed as devices in the sevice of diabolic power. Since too, from the 1520s in England, Protestant progaganda had sought to expose unreformed episcopal practice by English bishops, by 1549 - when the *Tragoedie* was published - propagandists could relate such anxiety to many specific instances of martyrdom. But what is most important here is the fact that, at least as early as 1549, there was a clear understanding of the way propaganda fashioned Protestant martyrs as well as how ubiquitous and influential it could be.

The observation that the issues covered in the Marian Catholic pamphleteers' writing suggests a great anxiety at how influential martyrological propaganda was at this time, is well made by Loades in *The Oxford Martyrs.* But, consistent with the approach of other studies on martyrological writing in

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64 *A Tragoedie*, sig. B.ii.[r].

the sixteenth century, Loades makes no attempt to identify either what discourses of martyrdom were or how they were formulated. Loades' study is also more concerned with the academic internal stylistics of this Catholic propaganda rather than the institutions and communities it emanated from. As a result, no attention is paid to who (bishops and reformers) or at what (anti-episcopal martyrology) the writing of Huggarde and Christopherson specifically directs its attention. The sense given by Loades' book is more that it was the furore of a reactionary Catholic regime coupled with anti-Spanish sentiment that contributed to the successful influence of martyrological accounts on popular opinion.[65] These observations by Loades are made in the context of the book's larger subject - the history surrounding the prominent Marian martyrs Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer -, and there is no indication that earlier *anti-episcopal* agitation had led to the formulation of the martyrological discourses that were used by the critics of the Marian regime. Discourses of martyrdom consisted of a complex set of intellectual ideas that were new to the sixteenth century, and popular opinion is not swayed overnight. Therefore some account has to be given of why, as is clear from the anxiety expressed by the Catholic authorities, martyrological books pamphlets and broadsides managed to gain such support for the Protestant cause.

Sixteenth-century discourses of martyrdom underwent their period of formation between 1520 and 1550 in several forms of anti-episcopal propaganda. Each form was created by focusing on an individual aspect of the

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[65] I do not doubt that these two factors contributed to anti-Catholic sentiment. After the accession of Mary I, there is a considerable output of anti-Catholic propaganda that plays on fears of Spanish interference in English affairs. See for example: Eusebius Pamphilus, *A Faithfvl Admonition of a certeyne true Pastor and Prophete* ... (Grenewych: Conrad Freeman, May 1554), and [Laurence Saunders], *A trewe mirrovor or Glase wherin we maye beholde the wofull state of thys our Realme of Englande, set forth in a Dialogue or communicacion betwene Eusebius and Theophilus* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1556).

whole process in which the martyr was involved as he or she came into contact with the state apparatuses that were concerned with maintaining religious conformity. The process began with episcopal visitation and examination, and could lead to indictment and confinement, arraignment, execution and probate. From the 1520s, Protestant apologists published occasional accounts of these different stages of the policing process in order to undermine the authority of bishops, question the legality of their procedures and depict them as persecutors of Protestant martyrs. I look at examples of propaganda pieces that focus on each of these parts of the episcopal policing process in my different Chapters. Anti-episcopal pamphlets and books concerned themselves separately with examination and visitation, confinement in episcopal gaols, arraignment and execution, last wills and testaments (probate) and posthumous letters. The accounts that Foxe gave in his *Actes and Monumentes* subsumed these different pieces under a single narrative since each of his accounts was based on a chronological description of the life and martyrdom of each of his subjects. Coats identifies these different areas as parts of martyrological narratives by Foxe, but does not show them to be a synthesis of these earlier pieces or note that they are specifically anti-episcopal. I argue that Foxe and his contemporaries were drawing on the discursive practices that had been formulated by these earlier propaganda pieces - and the new pietistic awareness that they had inculcated in their readers - when they eventually compiled their collections of Protestant *lives.* In the process they elided the anti-episcopal slant. Previous work on the discourses of martyrdom has begun to investigate martyrological theory, but only with respect to the publications of John Foxe et al. in the 1550s. My concern here is to trace its earlier

development and continuation, and its manifestation in, and its contribution to, the lobby against the episcopal hierarchy of the English church from the early 1520s.

Anti-episcopacy and the discourses of martyrdom were two sides of a single coin. It is difficult to understand how martyrological propaganda was effective without taking into account the fears and anxieties upon which it preyed. Martyrological discourses were both a natural and integral part of the consistent reproach of the unreformed English episcopal office. This is because they were developed specifically to attack the policing activities that had circumstantially accrued to the office of the bishop and his delegated officers in the English judicial system since the Middle Ages. In the texts with which I deal sixteenth-century martyrs were most often made at the hands of bishops. In this sense the early discourses of martyrdom *were* anti-episcopacy. Once the discourses of martyrdom had been forged into effective propaganda, the official role of the bishops in policing the form and extent of the English Reformation was always set to contribute to their own downfall. This method of turning the extensive practical power of the episcopal network within the State *onto itself* involved a sophisticated application of reformist polemic. In the hands of Foxe and his Anglican contemporaries, Protestant martyrological discourses were a vehicle for creating an unbroken early Christian tradition for the territorial English church that was to be established under Elizabeth I. The early propagandists, however, had created their various martyrological devices in an attempt to curb the power of the Pope, his cardinals and Tudor bishops. As I show, such devices were also used against bishops of the separating and 'reformed' English Church from Henry VIII to James I. Despite the adoption of a

martyrological framework by Anglicans such as Grindal and Foxe, anti-episcopal discursive practices were maintained by the more radical reformers who could not accept the Elizabethan Settlement as true reform. Since modern critical examinations of sixteenth-century martyrdom and martyrology have concentrated almost exclusively on Foxe and his followers the significance of anti-episcopacy in forming discourses of martyrdom has been lost. This thesis sets out to redress this problem and to identify that, even after Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes,* authentic anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom were still used by presbyterian propagandists. Without a consideration of the Foxean legacy and the unbalanced focus on his writing as an explanation of the meaning of sixteenth century martyrdom, neither pre- nor post-Marian anti-episcopal martyrology can be fully understood.

Chapter II: Henrician anti-clericalism and anti-episcopal martyrology: the forging of a discourse.

Chapter II

Henrician anti-clericalism and anti-episcopal martyrology: the forging of a discourse.

On 14 December 1514 a merchant-tailor named Richard Hunne was found hanged in his cell in the Lollards' Tower, where he was awaiting trial for heresy. A clerical court headed by the bishop of London quickly met and found the dead Hunne guilty, whereupon his body was burnt as a heretic. Defendants of the hapless Hunne claimed that he had been accused of heresy merely for his refusal to pay a mortuary fee for the burial of an infant and a threat to bring a case of praemunire to the King's Bench (the secular court). In *A Supplication for the Beggars* (1524 or 1529) Simon Fish comments on the Hunne case thus:

> If eny man yn your sessions [of the king's bench] dare be so hardy to endyte a prest of eny suche cryme[,] he hath or the yere go out suche a yoke of heresye leyd in his necke that it maketh him wisshe that he had not done it. Your grace may se whate a worke there is in London, howe the bisshoppe rageth for endyting of certayn curates of extorcion and incontinency the last yere in the warmoll quest. Had not Richard hunne commenced accyon of premunire ageinst a prest he had bin yet a lyue and non eretik a tall but an honest man.[1]

The *Supplication* is an unmitigated attack on the late-medieval church which deals in turn with clerical wealth, morality, power and justice, which it claims to be excessive, completely lacking, overbearing and corrupt respectively. Here Fish was attacking what he and other reform propagandists portrayed as a monopolistic revenue extracted under false pretences. It was a reiteration of his claim that 'Euery man and childe that is buried must pay sumwhat for masses and diriges to be song for him or elles they will accuse the dedes frendes and executours of heresie'[2]. The suspicious circumstances surrounding Hunne's death and the cause of his original imprisonment would certainly suggest that there was legitimate cause for grievances against ecclesiastical revenue from

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1 Simon Fish, *A Supplication for the Beggars* ([n.p.: n.pub., 1524 or 1529]), sigs.A.v.[r-v].

2 Fish, sig. A.ii.[r].

mortuaries and probate, not to mention the pressures exerted by the clergy to maintain such revenue.

The 'certayn curates' referred to by Fish were members of the clergy who had been indicted in a secular court, the wardmore [in]quest,[3] for extortion and incontinence the previous year. The bishop of London (Cuthbert Tunstall), Fish's account tells us, strongly opposed the authority of laymen to indict any curate that he had appointed to serve in his diocese, arguing that such matters could only be handled by the ecclesiastical judicial machinery. In general this extract from Fish's *Supplication* serves as a vignette opening onto the then topical issue of the immunity of the spirituality to prosecution and the actions against anyone who challenged such privilege. Fish gives Hunne as a case in point, suggesting that the only 'crime' he had committed was to have brought an action of praemunire against the priest that had cited him in the spiritual court of London ('Had not Richard hunne commenced accyon of premunire ageinst a prest he had bin yet a lyue and no eretik a tall'). But, bearing in mind the focus of this thesis, Fish's comments illustrate well how the authority to pronounce heresy was used to oppose religious reform. Because Hunne had questioned the legality/morality of mortuary fees and of papal jurisdiction (and, by implication, Catholicism) in England (with his case of praemunire), Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop of London, used a clerical court to pronounce him a heretic. Despite Tunstall's unsuccessful attempts at opposing and manipulating the secular power of ward liveries over the London clergy, his pronouncement of heresy and post-obit burning of Hunne's body claimed the victory - however

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[3] A wardmore was a meeting, under the presidency of the alderman, of the liverymen of a ward. A wardmore quest was a judicial enquiry made by a wardmore. In *The Lamentacyon of a Christen Agaynst the Cytye of London, for some certayne greate vyces vsed therin* (Nuremburg: [n.pub.], 1545), Thomas Brinklow, also mentions the wardmore quests when he says 'There is a custom in the Cytie, ones a yeare to haue a quest called the warnmall quest, to redresse vices, but alasse to what purpose cometh it, as it is used' (sig.B.ii.). Brinklow gives examples of the abuses of this judicial body by those in control of it.

superficially. This reveals that what was ultimately at stake in the battle between secular courts (with probable Protestant motives) and their ecclesiastical counterparts to control and/or reform the clergy, was the possession of authority to examine heresy; and, as I have already pointed out in the 'Introduction', there is a clear correlation between periods of reaction against reform and increased episcopal control over heresy cases.

This thesis provides textual evidence that, while secular and spiritual authorities contended with each other for mastery over the clergy and its conduct (in a bid to promote or discourage Protestant reform), anti-episcopal martyrology sought to undermine the potency and function of heresy charges. In fact the texts I look at effected the same process with many forms of religious 'misdemeanour', and, because all of these arose from endeavours to realise some kind of Protestant reform, each one was exploited as a moment of godly disclosure. If - by the theoretical processes described in Chapter 1 - accusations of religious deviation could be depicted as persecution and the entire procedure from citation to final punishment limned as a medium for divine revelation, then control over religious conformity no longer presented a problem to reformers. In this way, rather than compete directly for the power to proscribe what constituted aberrant piety, the a-episcopal propaganda sought to devalue the social currency of any such hegemonic function.

At first appearance the *Supplication* seems to attack the church in general, but, upon further analysis, it can be seen that many of the corruptions it discusses fall to the charge of the bishops and their officers, and here in this part of the *Supplication,* the bishop of London is mentioned by name. This Chapter offers a number of reasons - financial as well as personal - why

bishops (and their officials) may have persecuted Protestant reform. Fish reminds his readers of the famous case of the 'honest man' Richard Hunne who was killed and made an heretic as a result of such persecution. At this stage the literary martyrological form that showed how a well-known 'honest' citizen was falsely made an heretic by a raging bishop was in its infancy. But depictions like this, of ecclesiastical judicial processes as persecution, are the beginning of a number of highly refined forms of propaganda that Henrician and Marian anti-episcopalians used to pressure the English church for more thorough reform. This section will show that texts like the *Supplication,* which are usually only vaguely identified as 'anti-clerical', were in fact involved, to a greater or lesser extent, in the debate over the condition of unreformed Tudor episcopacy. The charges of corruption and persecution made in this literature can all be seen to arrive, at some point, at the door of the episcopal office, or palace, and at the consistory, visitational, probate, or specially commissioned episcopal courts.

In the 'Introduction' I applauded the call by Craig Harline and D. W. Sabean for a new approach to Reformation studies. Both of these historians contend that it is an examination of the *interaction* between different communities in the Reformation that can provide new evidence for sixteenth-century ecclesiastical history. They suggest that this new approach should replace the post-Reformation concern to produce supporting examples of either Catholic or Protestant predominance during the sixteenth century, which - for the reasons explained in the 'Introduction' above - has prepossessed ecclesiastical historians from John Foxe to Christopher Haigh. The texts that I examine reveal on every page a politically exigent discourse

created by the conflict between radical reforming and episcopal communities. But this notion of interaction is more than simply making use of historical context to extract meaning from texts: in this case it also shows us how anti-episcopal propagandists depicted the figures in their texts as manacled defendants of the Protestant church enthralled and tormented by the *real-politik* of careerist bishops.

In the 'Introduction' to *The New Oxford Book of Sixteenth-Century Verse*[4] Emrys Jones discusses the difficulties of defining literary style and technique according to the strictly chronological division of the century. His point is that, while the sixteenth century is often perceived as marking the end of the medieval and the beginning of the modern period, one still has to take account of certain medieval literary traditions and styles that persisted well into the century. 'We often think of the sixteenth century', writes Jones,

> as the first modern century; it might be just as well to think of it as the last medieval one, since 'medieval' and 'modern' elements, old established ways, and starkly innovative practices, fought it out throughout these hundred years.[5]

In Chapter 1, I have already discussed how, while there were clearly similarities between the sixteenth-century Protestant concept of martyrdom and the notion of liminal torment as a charitable act in female piety of the Middle Ages, there were also some crucial differences. These differences are what distinguish the texts I treat here as Protestant anti-episcopal martyrologies. A certain amount of traditional inheritance and adaptation occurred with the anti-episcopal forms of writing I look at here. But I am less interested in what this writing acquired from previous authors than in the transformations that were made. Certain satirical and allegorical criticisms of the church hierarchy were dowered to sixteenth-century reform propagandists by their predecessors, but these were

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4 *The New Oxford Book of Sixteenth-Century Verse*, chosen and ed. by Emrys Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.xxv-xxxix.

5 Jones (ed.), *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxix.

transformed into a more sustained anti-episcopal rhetoric and innovatively enhanced by the martyrological stance discussed in the previous Chapter. It is these changes that have largely gone unnoticed in the case of the texts I discuss here, but which signal an important form of sixteenth-century intellectual culture and writing that came about in response to a political situation specific to the English Reformation.[6] 'Viewed as a whole', remarks Jones in his 'Introduction',

> what we witness in the course of the sixteenth century is the recession, the cessation indeed, of one great literary system or order (the medieval) and the initiation of a new one (Renaissance or 'early modern'). ... The medieval literary system persisted well into the sixteenth century.[7]

As instances of 'ambitious medieval-type poem[s] being written in Tudor England',[8] Jones mentions the 1,400-line poem 'The Court of Love' - probably written at some time in the 1530s but which 'for a long time afterwards ... was included in editions of Chaucer and believed to be by Chaucer himself'[9] - and *Scottish Field,* a piece composed 'some time after the battle of Flodden (1513) [by] an unknown poet writing in Cheshire'[10] which emulated the alliterative style of the fourteenth-century *Sir Gawayn and the Green Knight.*

Jones' discussion is concerned with poetic styles, but to authors of sixteenth-century martyrological pieces, and to English Protestant writers in general, it was the religious satire in medieval writing that was of equal if not greater importance, and which consequently motivated them to edit and publish editions of medieval poems. William Langland's alliterative poem *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, probably composed some time between 1360-1390,[11] and the

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6 On the tradition of English Reformation writing see John N. King's *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) and his *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). See also Anthea Hume, 'Spenser, Puritanism and the "Maye" Eclogue', *Review of English Studies*, n.s. 20 (1969), 155-67.

7 Jones (ed.), *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxx.

8 Jones (ed.), *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxx.

9 Jones (ed.), *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxx.

10 Jones (ed.), *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxx.

religious treatises of the fourteenth-century religious critic John Wycliffe are further examples of the interest sixteenth-century Protestant authors showed in medieval writing. The Protestant reformer/author/translator/publisher Robert Crowley edited and published *The Vision of Piers Plowman* in 1550. It went through two reprintings in the same year and was printed for a fourth time by Owen Rogers in 1561.[12] Crowley (1518?-88), originally from Gloucestershire, was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. In his brief career as a publisher, as well as his three editions of Langland's *Vision,* he saw other controversial Protestant works through the press, including his own verse translation of the Psalms in 1549.[13] Although he returned to England after the exile he had been forced into during the reign of Mary I, his career in the Church of England was still troubled under Elizabeth I. He was, for example involved in the vestiarian controversy of the 1560s, writing propaganda against the continued use of certain vestments in the Elizabethan church.[14] Crowley, then, was a committed Protestant propagandist who saw the value of the material contained in Langland's *Vision* for the criticism of the Tudor church.

In the prefatory remarks to his edition of Langland's poem, Crowley pointed out to his readers that although the poem's language was somewhat antiquated, its message was of direct relevance to contemporary religious

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11 For authorship and dating of this poem see A. V. C. Schmidt's 'Introduction' to William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. by A. V. C. Schmidt (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1991), esp. pp.ix-xvi.

12 See *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. by A. V. C. Schmidt, 'Introduction', p.xii.

13 See, for example: *The Psalter of Dauid newely translated into Englysh metre in such sort that it maybe the more decently, and wyth more delyte of the mynde, be reade and songe of al men. Whereunto is added a note of four partes, ...* ([London]: Robert Crowley, 1549); *The Confutation of the mishapen Aunswer to the misnamed, wicked Ballade, called the Abuse of ye blessed sacrament of the aultare. Wherin, thou haste (gentele Reader) the ryghte vnderstandynge of al the places of scripture that Myles Hoggard, (wyth his learned counsall) hath wrested to make for the transubstanciacion of the bread and wyne* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548); *The confutation of xiii Articles, whereunto Nicolas Shaxton, late byshop of Salisburye subscribed and caused be set forthe in print the yere of our Lorde. MCxlvi when he recanted in Smithfielde at London at the burning of mestres Anne Askue, which is liuely set forth in the figure folowynge* (London: John Day, 1548).

14 See [Robert Crowley], *A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell and Ministring garmentes of the popishe church* ([London]: Henry Denham,1566).

concerns. 'The English', he wrote, 'is according to the time it was written in' but, he continues, 'Loke not vpon this boke therfore, to talke of wonders paste or to come, but to amende thyne owne misse, which thou shalt fynd here most charitably rebuked'.[15] While the style and language of Langland's allegorical dream vision is clearly medieval, says Crowley, its message remains important. In *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman,* William Barlow makes a similar apology for the style and language of a 'compendious olde treatyse' of Wycliffe 'shewynge howe that we ought to haue the scripture in Englysshe'[16] when he writes:

> Though I [Wycliffe's treatise] am olde clothed in barbarous wede
> Nothynge garnysshed with gaye eloquency
> Yet I tell the trouth yf ye lyst to take hede
> Agaynst theyr frowarde furious frenesy
> Which recken it for a great heresy
> And vnto laye people greuous outrage
> To haue goddes worde in their natyfe langage.[17]

But in a similar way to Crowley, Barlow argued that the reproduction of the treatise was still important because of the subject matter it contained. For the campaign against the church effected by sixteenth century Protestant martyrologists, the anti-episcopal passages in Langland's poem provided them, as Crowley had suggested, with material they needed for their contemporary anti-episcopal concerns. While in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* William Langland was critical of many social issues both secular and religious, he persistently attacked certain practices of the fourteenth-century church as corrupt using the methodology, normally associated with sixteenth-century Protestant humanism, of evaluating the church according to scriptural interpretation, and by making use of glossing and quotation. John Wycliffe also

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15 Quoted from *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. by Schmidt, 'Introduction', pp.xv-xvi.

16 William Barlow [or William Roy], *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche complaynynge to other their miserable calamite through the ambicion of the clergye* (Marlborough [Antwerp]: [n.pub.], 1530), sig.C.viii.[r].

17 Barlow, *A proper dyaloge*, sig.C.viii.[r]

followed similar techniques in his writing and the sixteenth-century Protestant propagandists noted, emulated and developed its force. In the 'Prologue' to his poem, Langland raised the issue of episcopal absenteeism and criticised bishops for the way in which they neglected their pastoral duties in order to pursue a career at court:

> Bisshopes and bachelers, bothe maistres and doctours -
> That han cure under Crist, and crownynge in tokene
> And signe that thei sholden shryven hire parisshens,
> Prechen and praye for hem, and the povere fede -
> Liggen at Londoun in Lenten and ellis.
> Somme serven the King and his silver tellen,
> In cheker and in Chauncelrie chalangen his dettes
> Of wardes and wardmotes, weyves and streyves.
> And somme serven as servaunts lordes and ladies,
> And in stede of stywardes sitten and demen.
> Hire messe and hire matyns and many of hire houres
> Arn doone undevoutliche; drede is at the laste
> Lest Crist in Consistorie acorse ful manye![18]

In Passus II, the episcopal official who summoned defendants for trial in the church courts (the summoner or apparitor) and the advocates of the provincial court of the Archbishop of Canterbury both feature as figures especially prone to taking bribes -

> To marien this mayde ['Mede', who is the personification of reward or gain]
> was many man assembled,
> As of knyghtes and of clerkes and oother commune peple,
> As sisours and somonours, sherreves and hire clerkes,
> Bedelles and baillifs and brocours of chaffare,
> Forgoers and vitaillers and vokettes of the Arches;
> I kan noght rekene the route that ran aboute Mede -[19]

and the injustice caused by the misuse of the episcopal punitive apparatus, in order to increase bishops' revenues, is noted when Langland writes:

> Denes and southdenes, drawe yow todigeres;
> Erchedekenes and officials and alle youre registrers,
> Lat sadle hem with silver oure synne to suffre -
> As devoutrye and divorses and derne usurie -
> To bere bisshopes aboute abrood in visitynge.
> Paulynes pryvees for pleintes in consistorie
> Shul serven myself that Cyvyle is nempned.
> And cartsadle the commissarie - oure cart shal he [drawe],
> And fecchen us vitailles at *fornicatores;*
> And maketh of Lyere a lang cart to leden alle thise othere,
> As fobberes and faitours that on hire feet rennen.[20]

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18 Langland, *Piers Plowman*, ed. by Schmidt, 'Prologue', ll.87-99.

19 *Piers Plowman*, Passus II, ll.57-62.

20 *Piers Plowman*, Passus II, ll.173-183.

As these examples show, Langland's poem does, at times, comment upon episcopal malpractice. Indeed Langland's censures of the bishops and their officers regarding absenteeism, dereliction of pastoral duties, avarice, careerism and abuse of their power and authority were quite extensive, and all were reiterated in sixteenth-century anti-episcopal texts. But bishops were by no means the only target of Langland's allegorical dream vision. While *The Vision of Piers Plowman* may well have supplied a source of poetic imagery and a tradition for the criticism of episcopal jurisdiction, the sixteenth-century anti-episcopal martyrologies I look at here refined and developed this into a comprehensive analysis of the episcopal institution. Furthermore, they utilised this institutional inspection as a framework to define their Protestant martyrs.

Along with his MS vernacular translations of the New Testament and other biblical commentaries, Wycliffe's treatises were circulating among the early sixteenth-century reformers, and the authorities ruthlessly hunted down these MS and their owners in their attempts to eradicate the spread of reformist ideas. Because of the illegal nature of such works, it is somewhat difficult to say exactly how much Wycliffite and Lollard material was circulating in the first decades of the sixteenth century, but it appears to have been significantly influential until reformers developed new translations and other forms of attack on the unreformed Church and saw them through the press. It is certain that Wycliffe's fragmentary English translations of the Bible were circulating among reformers and were made available to anyone curious enough to want to read the Bible for themselves. Until the illegal arrival of Tyndale's printed fragments of his New Testament translation in England in 1526, Wycliffe's pieces were the main available vernacular versions. There is a reference to the use of the old

translations by Wycliffe among the radical reformers of the 1520s in the depositions surrounding the purge of Essex Lollardy in 1528 by the Bishop of Lincoln and Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London. 'The Confession of Robert Necton, that bought and sold New Testaments in English'[21] reveals one episcopal investigation into the circulation of the recently printed New Testaments arriving from Tyndale's work on the Continent. But Necton's deposition also reveals how Wycliffe's material was in use prior to this. '[B]efore that Vicar Constantine [a reformer involved in the distribution of Tyndale's translations] caused this respondent to by some of the said New Testaments [Tyndale's], he had none, nor no other books, except the chapiters of Matthew'.[22] These latter books were Wycliffe's old vernacular translation of Matthew's Gospel. There is a further reference to the circulation and use of these Wycliffe Bible fragments in the confession of John Tyball, accused of heresy, from the same year. His deposition records how 'at Mychaelmasse last past was twelve monethe this respondent and Thomas Hilles came to London to Frear Barons,[23] then being at the Freers Augustines in London, to buy a New Testament in Englishe, as he saythe'. It then describes the transaction for purchasing the New Testament:

> the sayd Thomas Hilles and this respondent [Tyball] shewyd the Frear Barons of certayne Epistles of Peter and Poule in Englishe, Which bookes the sayd Frear dyd litle regard, and made a twyte of it, and sayd, A poynt for the, for they be not to be regarded toward the new printed Testament in Englishe. For it is of more cleyner Englishe. And then the sayd Frear Barons delyverid to them the sayd New Testament in Englyshe: for which they payd iiis. iid. and desyred them, that they wold kepe yt close.[24]

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21 On this and the following depositions see John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials, relating chiefly to Religion, and the Reformation of it, and the Emergencies of the Church of England, under King Henry VIII. King Edward VI. and Queen Mary I. with large Appendixes, Containing original papers, Records, &c.*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822); I, ii, pp.50-65.

22 Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, I, ii., XXII, 'The Confession of Robert Nection'.

23 This is Robert Barnes, chaplain to Henry VIII and author of the *Supplicatyon* dicussed in greater detail below in Chapter 3 in connection with examination rhetoric. He can be seen here as a well-known figure among reformers and enterprisingly supplying the printed New Testaments.

24 Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, I, ii, pp.53.

The 'Epistles of Peter and Poule in Englishe' are more of the old manuscript Wycliffe translations clearly being used by the early reformers. Barnes considered the new translations to have been as 'of more cleyner Englishe', but the older versions by Wycliffe had clearly served their purpose. Barnes may have had 'litle regard' for Wycliffe's fourteenth-century translations, considering them to be outdated in comparison to the new work of Tyndale, but the depositions mentioned here reveal that, in their mode as a-institutional proxy preachers they had served a purpose. In his confession, for example, John Tyball showed some distinctly a-institutional and anti-episcopal conclusions he had come to about the condition of the contemporary Church according to his reading of the 'Epistles of Peter and Poule in Englishe'. He 'affirmed and belevyd', for example, 'that every Prieste and Bishop owght to have a wiff [wife] upon the chapitour of Poule' and he ' thowght that pristhode was not necessary', believing, rather, 'that every layman myght mynister the sacramentes of the Churche, as well as any Prieste'. Furthermore, he had begun to conceive of the hierarchical offices of the church as corrupt and inefficient saying that he had:

> sumtyme doubted, whether the Pope or Bysshopp had power to graunt pardon. For sumtyme he thowght, that they had power, and sumetyme he thowghte the contrarie, becaus they had so muche mony for it. And he sayd, he thowghte, that yt were better, that their myters, crosses, ringes and other precious stones shuld be gyven to poore and nedy pepull, then so to were them; according to the saiynge of Poule, where he saythe, *Were ye no gold, silver nor perlls, ne precious stones.*[25]

Anti-episcopal martyrologists worked exclusively on this notion of the unscriptural wealth and jurisdiction of the episcopal office in their later texts, but like Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman,* Wycliffe's work had supplied an impetus and an idea. Barnes' attitude to Wycliffe's vernacularisations of the

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[25] All these quotations from the confession of Tyball are taken from Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, I, ii, 'Number XVII', pp.50-56.

Bible was similar to Crowley's notion of the rather antiquated style and language of Langland's dream vision. But Wycliffe's translations were certainly more accessible, to those who could not read Latin, than the official Vulgate, and they clearly seem to have formed some kind of instruction for parishioners alienated, in one way or another, from the religious teaching of the official Church.

The prominent Protestant reformer and biblical translator Miles Coverdale still considered Wycliffe's writings to be of importance in 1548 when he reproduced one of his treatises in a martyrological collection entitled *Wickliffes Wicket* (first published in 1546), which went through several subsequent editions and reprintings.[26] William Barlow had also incorporated some extracts of Wycliffe's religious writings (one against episcopal jurisdiction and one advocating a vernacular Bible) in his *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman*[27] published in Antwerp in 1530.[28] William Barlow is an interesting reform propagandist whose career weathered the storms of the reformation in the church from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I. Although he was in trouble with Cardinal Wolsey in 1529 for publishing books that supported reform, in the early 1530s, after the period in exile when *A proper dyalogue* was published, he was employed by Thomas Cromwell to write against Anabaptism. The result of this was his *A Dyaloge descrybyng the orygynall ground of these Lutheran faccyons, and many of theyr abusys compyled by syr wyllyam Barlow chanon* (1531),[29] which condemned the 'excesses' of the Anabaptist doctrine

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26 For a detailed discussion of this piece see Chapter 4 below.

27 William Barlow [or William Roy], *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche complaynynge to other their miserable calamite through the ambicion of the clergye* (Marlborough [Antwerp]: [n.pub.],1530).

28 On Wycliffe and the early sixteenth-century Lollard connection see Ann Hudson's *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), *Lollards and their Books* (London: Hambledon Press, 1985) and *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

and proposals for new church government. In 1536 he was promoted to the See of St. Asaph's and St. David's, and in 1548 to the somewhat wealthier bishopric of Bath and Wells. After another period of German exile during the reign of Mary I, he returned to England and was promoted to the See of Chichester by Elizabeth I in 1559.

Barlow's *A proper dyalogue* was part of the Marburg series of tracts designed and printed by the first wave of Henrician exiles in the 1520s and 1530s.[30] The inclusion of Wycliffe's chapter against episcopacy in Barlow's *A proper dyalogue* is an indication that anti-clericalism and English anti-monasticism was being forged at this time into anti-episcopal political theory. Later pieces show how this type of anti-episcopal writing had fully matured. It was characteristic of the English Protestant tradition to put criticisms of the Church in the mouths of plain-spoken countrymen. Thus in *A proper dyalogue* it was the 'husbandman' who was in possession of the Wycliffite tracts and who read them out to the 'gentleman'. 'Where as the clergy' reads Barlow's candid ploughman-figure,

> perceyueth that lordlynes + worldly dominion can not be borne out bi scripture then flie they to argumentes of mennes persuasyon sayenge after thys maner Seynt Huge + seynt Swithune were thus lordes + in this they ensued Christes lyuyng + his doctrine therefore we may be laufully thus lordes. [31]

It is only by recourse to later commentators, said Barlow through the persona of his farm labourer, that a lordly hierarchy could be justified by the Church authorities. This was part of a general theoretical attack, supported by theological argument from exegesis of the Bible, on ecclesiastical administration by episcopacy. Its invective against lordship targeted the

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29 (London: Rastell 1531; London: John Cawood, 1553).

30 See See Robert Steele, *Notes on English Books Printed abroad, 1525-48 Bibliographical Society* (London: Blades, East & Blades, 1912) and M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1939) and my further discussion of this group of texts below in this Chapter.

31 Barlow, *A proper dyalogue*, sig.B.iiii.[r].

hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, commissaries, and the embodiment of their authority within the canon law. The main political argument against episcopacy - which was also based on theological premises - was that these ecclesiastical lords should not be encumbered by secular office or be covetous of temporal wealth. The treatise has three pages against the clergy holding hierarchical posts equivalent to temporal lords. It notes that the episcopal hierarchy claim that their posts are not like those of the temporal arm but that all the goods and possession of land they hold are in common for all, and that they use them, for example, to administer alms to the poor. But the truth, says the tract, is:

> ... they wold gladly be kynges of all the realme or the world. For where their londes + secular mennes fraunchyse ar to gether they striue who shall haue the galowes or other maner tourmentes for felaunes. They kepe also vnder bondage their tenantes and their yssue with their londes. And this is the moste ciuilite or secular lordshyppinge that any kynge or lorde hath on his tenauntes. And thefore we maye se howe they cleyme in their goodes a maner of proper possessyon contrarye to the comonnynge of the comone goodes in tyme of the perfyte men in the begynnynge of Christes chirche.[32]

Barlow's plowman-figure advocated Wycliffe's original claim that the clergy attempted to attain political power by gaining maximum economic and legal control over the local community. This, then, shows a theorising of the way in which episcopal hegemony was sustained - although it may not have used such theoretical terms - through economic and legal control. It reveals the way in which early sixteenth-century reform propaganda had already focused on an examination of the episcopal institution in the cause of Church reform. While Barlow's *A proper dyalogue* is not given over exclusively to this anti-episcopal aspect of reform propaganda, other contemporary and later martyrological pieces are, and it is the groundwork laid by writers such as Langland and Wycliffe that enables this. Both Wycliffe in the fourteenth century and Barlow

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32 Barlow, *A proper dyalogue*, sig. B.vi[r].

after him, argued that the impropriation of lands by the clergy caused more poverty than it claimed to alleviate by giving alms. It is clear that neither author extended the theologically grounded political theory against episcopacy to the power of secular lordship. On the contrary the argument was used to regain and reinforce the power of the secular arm. This limitation, and its application, can be seen in most of the political systems set up in the reforming areas of France, Germany, Switzerland and the East European States where clerical authority was appropriated to the magisterial secular arm, which acted as sole arbiter of the law although often in the form of a Consistory which took advice from non-landowning church elders.[33] The problem of church reformation in England was that, even if some of the power inherent in episcopal landowning and office-holding could be appropriated back to the magistracy - the gentleman landowner -, the apparatus of penal control and concilliar or other high level decision-making was invested considerably in the hands of the episcopal hierarchy. This was embodied in, for example, the ecclesiastical courts, the political geography of the Archbishop's See and the bishop's diocese, and the presence of bishops in governmental institutions like the Privy Council and Convocation. In addition to this it was these ecclesiastical government and legal institutions that were used - because of the extent of their established role in community administration - to secure and police the Reformation in England under what were considered by many to be limited terms. This lent a double edge to the arguments launched against bishops by reformers because, not only was the episcopal system depicted as a corrupt

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[33] For a discussion of the implications of this see, for example, Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Strikes and Salvation at Lyons', in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Gloucester: Duckworth, 1975), pp.1-16. See also R. Po-Chia Hsia, 'The Myth of the Commune: Recent Historiography on City and Reformation in Germany', *Central European History* 20:3-4 (1987), 203-215.

definition of the administration of Christ's true church, but it was possible to confirm this by the fact that it was the bishops who persecuted the reformers - figures who dubbed themselves by various means the followers of the true church. While the early-modern state apparatus in England could not do without the episcopal system, all the time it remained extant it was going to incite a powerful lobby for Protestant reform of the Church.

An important objective in Protestant propagandist writing was to demonstrate that the piety they advocated was not an innovation, as their opponents claimed, but the resurgence of a tradition that had continuously existed since the time of Christ. It was therefore important to show how earlier authors had also, through careful scrutiny and evaluation of the scriptures, denounced the corrupt practices of the Church. That is why in his *A proper dyaloge* Barlow had his 'gentleman' respond to the husbandman's citation of the Wycliffite treatise against ecclesiastical landowning and lordship with:

> Nowe I promyse the after my iugement
> I haue not hard of soche an olde fragment
> Better groundyd on reason with scripture.
> Yf soche auncyent thynges myght come to lyght
> That noble men hadde ones of theym a syght
> The world yet wolde chaunge peraventure
> For here agaynst the clergye can not bercke
> Sayenge as they do thys is a newe wercke
> Of heretykes cotryued lately.[34]

The reprintings of Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman* and Wycliffe's writings served the purpose of refuting pietistic innovation well, in addition to supplying a rich fund of poetic allegory and anagogy along with a conventional register and style through which criticism of the Church could be made. The fact that the persona of the outspoken rustic continued to be used throughout the sixteenth century for criticising the church, in works like Skelton's *Collyn Clout* (1522),[35] William Barlow's *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a*

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34 Barlow, *A proper dyalogue*, sig. C.v[v].

husbandman (1530),[36] Edmund Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579),[37] and Anthony Gilby's, *A Pleasaunt Dialogue, Betwene a Souldior of Barwicke, and an English Chaplaine* (1581),[38] is evidence of the way in which this poetic allegory and vocal stance was considered to be stylistically powerful and expedient.[39] But the propaganda of anti-episcopal martyrology developed and refined the rustic persona and the medieval allegory in a way that had hitherto not been achieved, creating, in the process a form of writing unique to the period and the Protestant lobby. Protestant authors of anti-episcopal martyrology made a more detailed analysis of all of the episcopal activities found in Langland, Wycliffe and their imitators as well as isolating and examining activities previously not mentioned. Their criticism of the church was effected, in fact, by this very technique of focusing solely on the actions of the Tudor episcopal hierarchy. It was through such a process of refinement that martyrological propagandists justified the validity of Protestant piety. This feature of anti-episcopal martyrology distinguished it from more general criticisms of the church which were seeking a less radical or less committed change in Tudor doctrine and ecclesiology. It is this difference between Protestant anti-episcopal martyrology and the contemporary more general

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35 John Skelton, *Here after foloweth a lytell boke called Collyn Clout, compyled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate* ([n.pl.: n.pub., 1531?]). In *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse* (London: Penguin, 1993), David Norbrook points out that the 'poem was probably written in 1521-2 and was included in John Stowe's edition of Skelton's *Workes* published in 1568. It was reprinted', he continues, 'in editions which date from about 1545, 1554 and 1558' (p.819).

36 William Barlow, *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche complaynynge to other their miserable calamite through the ambicion of the clergye* (Marlborough [Antwerp]: [n.pub.],1530).

37 *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), in *The Works of Spenser*, ed. by R. Morris (London: Macmillan, 1899), pp.439-486.

38 ([n.pl.: n.pub.], 1581).

39 For a comprehensive discussion of the use of this poetic voice in the sixteenth century see John King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

criticism of the church, less focused on the activity of bishops, that I shall explain in a little more detail now.

Most of the texts I scrutinise in this thesis are, in terms of the attention afforded to them by literary critics and historians, relatively obscure. But they did draw to a certain extent on various earlier anti-institutional images and vignettes that appeared in better-known works of the Reformation. There are several passages in the texts I analyse that use a similar lexical set and group of images to these more renowned works, but there are important differences between these groups of texts - differences which distinguish the texts I discuss in this thesis as requiring separate treatment. The clear difference in the application of the ideas between the earlier and later pieces shows how anti-clerical writing was developed and forged into anti-episcopal martyrology.

Desiderius Erasmus in *The Praise of Folly*, for example, focused on the vestments of the Roman Catholic bishop's office to interrogate the disjunction between original ecclesiastical protocol and contemporary practice. He exposed the folly of allowing the courtly accretions of status and power to obscure the true function of a bishop. 'If our bishops would but stop and consider', observes Erasmus' mouthpiece Folly,

> what their white albs signify - namely, sincerity and pure life in every way untainted; what is signified by their two-horned miter, the peaks of which are joined by a common knot - a perfect knowledge and understanding of the Old and New Testaments; what is meant by their wearing of gloves - the immaculate administration of the sacraments, untainted by any selfishness or self-concern; what their crozier symbolizes - their diligent and protective watch of the flock that they are charged with; and what is signified by the cross that is carried before them in processions - the victory of spiritual charity over carnal affections. If they would but contemplate these and other virtues, I am sure that it would be safe to say that they would not lead such troubled and shameful lives. But as it is they are too busy feeding themselves to think on these things; as for the care of their sheep, they delegate this duty to one of their subordinates (suffragans, as they call them) or to Christ Himself. Nor have they stopped to contemplate the title that they bear or to examine its meaning; bishop, meaning labor, diligence, and solicitude. Yet when it comes to pecuniary matters they truly act the part of a bishop to the hilt overseeing everything - and overlooking nothing.[40]

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[40] Quoted from Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* in *The Essential Erasmus*, ed. and trans. by John P. Dolan (New York etc.: Mentor Books, 1964), p.156. I am gratefult to Dr. Maslen for directing me to this

Here Erasmus observed the way in which liturgical ceremonial and ecclesiastical protocol developed, since the death of Christ, under the influence of court procedures. He pointed out that such interferences, with the increments in status and power they had brought, had led to oblivious disregard for the true function of bishops. Folly then proceeded with a criticism of cardinals, using a similar analysis of their official vestments to do this.

Adopting a voice similar to William Langland's humble ploughman in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* or William Barlow's husbandman in *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman,* John Skelton in his poem *Collyn Clout* also used vestiarian imagery as part of his general denunciation of the Church. Like Erasmus, he identified the folly of allowing ceremonial accretions to obscure the original inauguration and role of the episcopal office. The Pope, said Skelton through the persona of Collyn Clout, may, at any time:

> An holy anker call
> Out of the stony wall
> And hym a bysshop make
> yf he on hym dare take
> To kepe so harde a rule
> To ryde upon a mule
> With golde all be trapped
> In purple and paule be lapped
> Some hatted and some capped
> Rychly be wrapped
> God wotte to theyr great paynes
> In rotchettes of fyne raynes
> Whyte as mares mylke
> Theyr tabertes of fyne sylke
> Theyr styrops of myxt golde be gared
> There may no cost be spared
> Theyr moyles golde dothe eate
> Theyr neyghbours dye for meate.[41]

Under the present system, Skelton's unreserved rustic persona declares, no consideration is given to the vocation or function of the bishop. According to Collyn Clout, all that mattered, and all that episcopal lordship signified, was the authority of the pope - which was at the disposal of any whim he may have had

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passage.

41 Quoted from David Norbrook, *Renaissance Verse*, p.525, ll.3-20.

- and the extravagant attire and expenditure of the bishop made at the cost of the well-being of his parishioners.

Both Robert Barnes in *A Supplycatyon* (1531)[42] and William Turner in *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe* (1543),[43] concentrated on the attire and accessories of the bishops to denounce Tudor episcopal practice. But the significance of these vestiarian pericopes in, on the one hand, Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* and Skelton's *Collyn Clout* and, on the other hand, Barnes' *Supplycatyon* and Turner's *The huntyng* is strikingly different. As my detailed discussion of passages by Barnes and Turner in Chapter 3 reveals, Barnes talked of the staff carried by bishops (originally the 'baculum pastoralem' or shepherds' staff) being used as a means of entrapment and incarceration, and Turner talked of the ample folds of the bishop's mitre as a place where the remains of consumed sheep could be concealed. To begin with, the contexts of the passages from Erasmus and Skelton are quite different to those of Barnes and Turner. During the course of her disquisition, for example, Folly was critical of the full range of her contemporary political (secular and religious) institutions. Few emerged unscathed: theologians, all churchmen, the monastic life, the condition of the Church, the figure of the Prince, courtiers, philosophers - were all claimed by Folly as her worshippers and followers. Her denunciation must be understood as a part of the initial stages of the Catholic reformation as envisaged by Erasmus, which - as an institutional analysis - clearly cannot be compared with later Protestant criticisms of Catholic doctrine and ecclesiology. It must be noted too, that Erasmus' identification of the disjunction apparent

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[42] Robert Barnes, *A Supplycatyon made by Robert Barnes doctoure in diuinite vnto the most excellent and redoubted prince kinge henrye the eyght* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1531).

[43] William Turner, *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe, which more then seuen yeares hath bene hyd among the bisshoppes of Englonde, after that the Kynges Hygnes had commanded hym to be dryuen owt of hys Realme* (Basyll: [n.pub.], 1543).

between the attire and conduct of bishops sought to reinvigorate the Christian significance of the various functions of the contemporary bishop's attire and office - his purity of life, impeccable scriptural knowledge, handling of the sacraments, pastoral duties and position as moral exemplar. In contrast, Barnes and Turner sought a thorough reassessment of such functions.

Skelton too, was less consistently critical of episcopal policing apparatus than the anti-episcopal martyrologists (and he did not make use of martyrological discourses) because his oppositional rhetoric in *Collyn Clout* was couched in more general, and probably occasional, terms. As David Norbrook points out in his 'Introduction' to his anthology of Renaissance verse, in *Collyn Clout* Skelton was '[turning] from a courtly to a city audience' when 'he adopted the persona of a plain-speaking rustic denouncing abuses in the Church'.[44] According to Norbrook, Skelton's motivation for directing his poetry at a new audience arose from the fact that '[h]is bids for advancement from the young Henry VIII on his accession to the throne in 1509 ... met limited encouragement, his way apparently being blocked by the King's chief minister, Cardinal Wolsey'.[45] In the final analysis 'Skelton's involvement with Protestantism and humanism', says Norbrook, 'was not deep-rooted'.[46]

Albeit for different reasons, the rhetoric deployed in the writing of Erasmus and Skelton shows a clear difference between their writing and the more specialised and narrowly-targeted form of anti-episcopal martyrology in, for example, the pieces by Barnes and Turner. This latter type of writing concentrated exclusively on the episcopal office in the Tudor Church using the structures of that office as a means to effect its Protestant rhetoric of opposition

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44 David Norbrook, *Renaissance Verse*, 'Introduction', p.15.
45 Norbrook, 'Introduction', pp.14-15.
46 Norbrook, 'Introduction', p.15.

to contemporary piety and ecclesiology. In *Collyn Clout* Skelton also mentioned the abuses of episcopal courts and jurisdictional control -

> The poore people they yoke
> With sommons and citacyons
> And excommunycacyons
> Aboute churches and market[47] -

the inordinate wealth and excessively sumptuous furnishings of the bishop's palace -

> The bysshop on his carpet
> At home full softe dothe sytte
> This is a farly fytte
> To here the people jangle
> Howe warely they wrangle[48] -

and the abuse practised in affairs of probate and charitable donations for masses for the dead:

> And all the faute they lay
> In you prelates ... [saying]
> Howe ye breke the dedes wylles
> ...
> The money for theyr masses
> Spent among wanton lasses
> Theyr dyriges are forgotten
> Theyr founders lye there rotten.[49]

But Skelton did not concentrate exclusively on these issues in the same way as the anti-episcopal martyrological pieces I examine. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate how anti-episcopal martyrology made a much more extensive examination of Tudor episcopacy, focusing on episcopal courts and the bishop's palace to effect its Protestant oppositional rhetoric. In Chapter 4, I show how certain anti-episcopal propaganda texts concentrated exclusively, and at length, on affairs of probate and testators' wills in creating the powerful, and apparently effective, martyrological discourses.

While, like Erasmus and Skelton, Barnes' and Turner's attacks on the English Tudor episcopate also employed scriptural knowledge and satire to identify and criticise the corrupt accretions of their contemporary church, the

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47 Quoted from Norbrook, p.525, ll.23-26.
48 Quoted from Norbrook, pp.525-6, ll.27-31.
49 Quoted from Norbrook, p.526, ll.32-56.

way in which they exploited the forms of a bishop's attire to associate lurid images of entrapment, confinement and corporeal destruction with episcopal jurisdiction, reveals a striking contrast between their vestiarian sections and those of their immediate predecessors. Furthermore, although they used similar images to make their point the two writers of the later anti-episcopal pieces - Barnes and Turner - placed considerably more emphasis on the need to thoroughly reconsider and overhaul not only the status but the authority and apparatus of the Tudor episcopal office in England. The writing of poets and authors like William Langland, John Wycliffe, Desiderius Erasmus and John Skelton reveals a common tradition of ecclesiastical criticism that provided a source of poetic meaning for sixteenth-century anti-episcopal martyrologists. But these two groups of authors and texts cannot be subsumed under a single heading. The latter, and other anti-episcopal martyrologists like them, refined and crystallised a single element of the former criticism, adding to it and developing it - substantially as well as poetically - until a quite distinct and historically anchored form of writing had been created.

Discourses of martyrdom were moulded by making a record of what transpired when bishops met reformers and presenting a version of these occurrences within a particular frame. As each of my subsequent Chapters shows, subtly different methods were used to display this interaction, but at the heart of them all was an *exposé* of episcopal legislative and executive power and the way it was wielded against Protestant reformers in England. What was revealed of the English episcopate was corruption, persecution and poor knowledge of the scriptures: what was suggested was that together these served to perpetuate an unchristian kingdom bent on accruing temporal wealth

to the bishops. The power of reform propaganda lay in this disclosure of what happened when two such communities met. This section shows how anti-episcopal martyrologies were formed by a presentation of the interaction between early Henrician reformers such as William Tyndale, William Barlow, William Roye, George Joye and Hugh Latimer, and Henry VIII's bishops like Cuthbert Tunstall, John Stokesly, John Longland and Stephen Gardiner. As the 'Introduction' has demonstrated, the conflict between reformers and Henrician bishops has been used both to define a vague notion of anti-clericalism and as evidence for either a Protestant or Catholic *cause célèbre.* Rather, I suggest that the texts which I examine show that the contact between reformers and bishops was strongly marked by an antagonism towards the episcopal office, and that from this, a quite distinct type of writing and set of pietistic practices emerged.

This section, then, does two things. It looks at modern research on the condition and status of the English episcopal office in the early part of the sixteenth century. From this I evaluate what role English bishops played during the English Reformation, how they interacted with reformers, and how this led to the shaping of anti-episcopal discourses in the propaganda texts of the early reformers.

Until now, the specific targetting and distinctive martyrological discursive practices in these texts has gone largely unnoticed for two main reasons: historians have paid some attention to these texts but literary critics have not, and the few that have do not identify anti-episcopal martyrological discourses. The texts that I examine have been substantially ignored except, in the case of, for example, Charles C. Butterworth's and Chester G. Allan's *George Joye*

1495?-1553 A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation, and William Clebsch's *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535,*[50] which only really provide biographical sketches of their authors set in an historical narrative. John King's *English Reformation Literature* and *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* and David Norbrook's *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* do look at a 'native English tradition' of radical reform literature beginning with William Langland, Geoffrey Chaucer, John Wycliffe and Lollard writers in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and being taken up again by writers like Bale from the 1550's to Edmund Spenser and John Milton. King talks of a 'Protestant aesthetics' and Norbrook of poetry that shows a 'Protestant critique of ecclesiastical tradition', but none of these studies show the predominance of anti-episcopal martyrology in contemporary works as I do here. They concentrate, rather, on the presence of general reform sentiment in more mainstream drama and poetry.[51] The anti-episcopal martyrological pieces I identify show a quite different and, I believe, more powerful printed form of church criticism to the satire of the ploughman figure. The texts I look at don't simply satirise the faults of the Tudor church. In addition, they function as Protestant preachers in their lengthy

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[50] Charles C. Butterworth and Allan G. Chester, *George Joye 1495?-1553 A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962); and William A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535*, Yale Publications in Religion 11 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964). There are now occasional references to the martyrology of, for example, Bale in the modern edition of his *Vocacyon* by Peter Happé and John King, but this is flawed as noted above, and there is no full length study of such discourses in these texts.

[51] See: John King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), and his *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1984); Alistair Fox, *Politics and Literature in the Reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Greg Walker, *John Skelton and the Politics of the 1520s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). See also John Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth-Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman*, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 8 ([n.p.]: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978).

explications and discussions of scriptural passages, and they redeem heretics as Protestant martyrs in a process that condemns their episcopal opponents.

On the other hand, for institutional reasons, historians have discredited the texts I look at here as poor history, or plundered their rich discursive practices only for anecdotal material. Historians frequently begin discussions of the historical sketches in works like Barlow's *Dialogue betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman* (1530), Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates* (1530), or Bale's *Chronycle concernynge ... syr Johan Oldecastell* (1544) and *Vocacyon* (1553) - all of which contain disquisitions on ecclesiastical history and the establishment of the English church - with the caveat that they do not write 'accurate' or 'realistic' history. For example in *The Debate on the English Reformation,* Rosemary O'Day summarises the work of the early Henrician exiles by saying:

> The Antwerp writers believed that there had once existed a golden age which had been subverted by the clergy. They added little, if anything, to the complaints of the Lollards against the clerical estate. Their view of the 'golden age' of England was no more subtle than their explanation of how it had been brought down.[52]

O'Day then quotes from William Barlow's *A proper dyalogue* (1530) - although she does not cite it as a passage from this source - as an example of this idea of a golden age. I contest that it is unlikely that Barlow and others 'believed' in this notion of a golden age. But presenting economic and political strife as a result of the practices of an evil English episcopate was very effective propaganda when presented to a popular imagination. Both Barlow's *Dialogue* and Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates* were issued from what is known as the 'Marburg Press', a name derived from the fictitious colophon ('By me, Hans Luft of Marburg in the land of Hesse') used for a series of at least 10 English pro-reform books, authored by the first Henrician exiles, and probably printed in Antwerp and smuggled into England between 1528 and 1530.[53] Included

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52 Rosemary O'Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London: Methuen, 1986), p.8.

53 See Robert Steele, *Notes on English Books Printed abroad, 1525-48* Bibliographical Society

among these were other works of Protestant propaganda like the books by Tyndale and Barlow, as well as works of translation and commentary on the Bible.[54] It is curious that such recent observations as that above by O'Day and others do not take account of the fact that texts like the *Dialogue* and *The Practyse of Prelates* were reform propaganda. Both of these texts were part of a smear campaign against the Pope, and his cardinals and bishops including those in England, so, when looking at the type of history they write, some effort has to be made to assess how they may have been attempting to generate meaning (how they related to their audience), by acknowledging first that they functioned as propaganda.

R. W. Scribner's study[55] on the use of woodcut iconography by the evangelical mission of the German reformer-printers to enlighten and instruct the common man is informative on this point. Although Scribner discusses the woodcuts and pamphlets produced in Germany by, for example, the Cranach School and other groups of reformer printers in centres like Wittenberg, Nuremberg, Strassburg, Augsburg and Magdeburg, his linguistic theory certainly holds good for English textual forms too. Scribner uses a fund of

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(London: Blades, East & Blades, 1912) and M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1939).

[54] As well as *The Practyse of Prelates* and *A proper dyaloge*, these included: *The Parable of the Wicked mammon* (Printed at Malborowe in the londe off hesse by Hans Luft the viij. day of May Anno M.D.xxviij.[8 May 1528]); Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christen man and how Christen rulers ought to governe where in also (yf thou marke diligently) thou shalt fynde eyes to perceave the crafty conveyaunce of all iugglers* (At Marlborow in the lande of hesse The seconde daye of October. Anno. M.CCCCC.xxviij by me Hans luft [2 October 1528]); Frith's *A pistle to the Christen reader. The Revelation of Antichrist. Antithesis wherein are compared togeder Christes actes and oure holye father the Popes* ([At Marl]borow in the land of Hes[se the] xij day of Julye An no M.CCCCC.xxix. [by me] Hans luft) and *The examination of Master william Thorpe preste accused of heresye before Thomas Arundel Archebishop of Canturbury the yere of ower Lorde. M.CCCC. and seven. The examinacion of the honorable knight syr Jhonn Oldcastell Lorde Cobham burnt bi the said Archbisshop in the fyrste yere of Kynge Henry the fyfth. Be no more ashamed to heare it than ye were ad be to do it* ([n.p.: n.pub., n.d.]). The last of these is discussed below in chapter 4. Knappen includes Fish's, *A Supplication for the Beggars* ([n.p.: n.pub., 1524 or 1529]) as emanating from this printing house in Antwerp.

[55] R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

primary sources to show how reformers drew upon a 'symbolic capital' (a *langue*[56]) accrued from popular cultural practices and beliefs in order to create *paroles*, not only to denigrate clerical orders and the official hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church, but also to forge 'a new language and new symbols of attachment to evangelical ideals'.[57] This fund of symbols, says Scribner, exploited anti-clerical sentiment to denote the pre-Reformation Catholic order as contaminated, while the formation of new language and symbols - in attempting to educate its readers primarily by directing them 'to use biblical criteria in religious matters'[58] - imparted a new sense of evangelical 'institutional solidarity'.[59] Both stages of evangelising propaganda, says Scribner, deploy psychological and sociological techniques: complex and abstract issues are made black and white and reified so that the evangelical struggle is depicted as for example Luther or Christ against the Pope, preacher against monk and the opposition of one distinct worshipping community against another; and well-known social grievances are drawn upon to show that particular situations or mundane matters have universal significance or transcendental import.[60] Two forms that Scribner discusses as examples of the above techniques and processes are the *Scheltbriefe* and the *Schandbild.* As part of the symbolic capital of late-medieval popular culture, the former was a 'letter of insult', often

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[56] Scribner acknowledges the structuralist theories of Roland Barthes in *Elements of Semiology* (London: Cape, 1984), *Image Music, Text* (London: Fontana, 1977) and *Mythologies* (London: Cape, 1972), but for the formulation of the notion of a langue - the basic vocabulary from which all utterances (paroles) are constructed - see Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. by Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). For a criticism of the Saussurean notion of a fixed *langue* see, for example, V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[57] Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, p.241.

[58] Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, p.190.

[59] Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, p.242.

[60] On propagandist representations of natural phenomena as symbols of theological significance, see for example the study by Ottavia Niccoli, *Prophecy and People in Renaissance Italy*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), which includes a discussion of how a 'monstrous birth' of a deformed calf portentously prefigured, in a Counter-Reformation pamphlet, the distortions in the birth of Luther's teachings.

used to redress grievances where the law courts had proved inadequate. For the reformation this was transformed into the depiction of the targets - nobility or superiors who supported the Catholic regime - being hanged, dismembered or disemboweled, by connotation a death shameful even among the poor. The *Schandbild,* appearing on its own or incorporated within a *Scheltbriefe*, heaped abuse on a target and in one of his descriptions of reformist manipulation of this popular cultural form Scribner points out that:

> [the Schandbild] showed the seal of the person under attack being pressed into a heap of excrement or into a sow's behind. The seal was a sign of personal commitment and good faith, like our present-day use of a signature. Such depictions thus expressed the injured party's conviction of the faithlessness of his opponent: his seal was worth no more than dung, fit only for an animal's behind.

Scribner observes how propaganda such as this had a distinct mission within the German Reformation when he says that the 'artists and publishers responsible for broadsheet propaganda were not just seeking to manipulate public opinion, but also expressing their fervent conviction of the correctness of evangelical belief'.[61] Although the propagandists may have skilfully worked with structural techniques, their creations were not disinterested and this situation also holds true for the English reformers.

In his model Scribner draws on the basic semiotic theory that a 'sign' consists of two aspects: a 'signifier' (an actual written or spoken word) and a 'signified' (the set of unique images and associations that the signifier produces in the receiver). Algebraically this is rendered as sign = signifier/signified, and therefore, changing the value of any one of the elements will alter the whole equation. In his study Scribner shows how such an alteration was made by the publication of pictorial broadsheets during the German reformation. The value of many different signs, he says, that had previously been the property of the established church, was modified by changing the value of their signifieds. In

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61 Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, p.240.

this thesis, I show how English martyrological texts concentrated on one sign in particular - that of bishop -, and how, by thoroughly investigating and reporting upon the signified of the signifier 'bishop', they produced a new sign that bore a currency and validity of its own. This new sign was simply the reformist idea of what was signified by 'bishop'. By adjusting some of the factors in the equation that made up the denotation of an English bishop, the martyrological propaganda that I examine did two things: it effected an iconoclastic treatment of the contemporary episcopal office and then rebuilt that same office according to its primitive version as described in the Bible. Whereas the English authorities (both secular and ecclesiastical) were at pains to have the sign 'bishop' understood as an incontrovertible figure of great learning, a *jure divino* authority, Protestant propagandists used certain discursive practices in the texts I examine to render 'English bishop' as an avaricious and worldly careerist intent on the damnation not only of his own soul but all of those within his reach and cure. The martyrological propaganda that I probe in this thesis generated a signified of bishops as a corruption and degradation of the apostolic purity of the primitive church. By providing documentary evidence of the persecutory visitation machinery of the contemporary episcopal institution, this martyrological propaganda rendered the English bishops as figureheads of an international network tyrannising true Christians in order to maintain their assumed power and authority. From this, it can be seen that it was important for all polemicists during the course of the English Reformation to control certain signs according to their own interests.[62] The battle over the right to circulate an English vernacular scripture, which was particularly protracted in England compared to other European countries,[63] reveals how important the

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62 Rosemary O'Day acknowledges this in *The Debate on the English Reformation*, p.18.

control of religious semiotic material was to the ruling authorities there. But my investigation of martyrological propaganda shows a previously unexplored confrontation over one sign in particular -'bishop' - at least as central to the course of the English Reformation as the struggle to release the semiotic power of the Bible from the monopoly of a ruling institution; and the two affrays are not unrelated of course, because it was the episcopal officers in particular who sought to maintain the control over the Vulgate and associated rituals of the late medieval episcopal church.

As a qualification of the comments by O'Day and others about crudity in historical analysis, Scribner's study is a salutary warning that all sources have to be treated with extreme sensitivity as to the culture in which they were produced. I have pointed to the fact that all of the texts discussed in this thesis are English anti-episcopal propaganda, and indeed as such their level of signification must be understood in the light of Scribner's model of the part of propaganda in the process of the Reformation. When the combined methodologies of the cultural historian and the literary critic are applied to such texts as William Barlow's *Dialogue* and Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates*, new levels of meaning are made apparent and their affective role as anti-episcopal propaganda can be identified.

Thus Barlow's idealisation of a 'golden age' before clerical abuses set in drew on concrete social grievances like anti-clerical sentiment, and economic hardship due to enclosure, as well as the inflation felt by gentleman and husbandman alike. If Barlow's world before the monastic accretions was idealistic it was because his text appealed to clear polar opposites (serving to pit good against evil) in the popular imagination in order to create a reforming

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63 See the further discussion of this below in the Chapter.

parole. This parole at once instructed and created solidarity. In *The Practyse of Prelates,* Tyndale drew on similar public concerns to Barlow. Tyndale bodied forth the activities of contemporary bishops as serving a corrupt non-scriptural kingdom against all temporal law, and as revealing a serious dereliction of religious duty. He also showed how contemporary episcopal Sees functioned like small autonomous kingdoms, and how they manipulated scriptural exegesis with the purpose of increasing their temporal wealth and power. Limned in this way, 'episcopacy' represented a delegation that persecuted members of the true primitive church. With persistent use, the creation of this and other anti-episcopal *connotations* of specific contemporary bishops became *denotation.* Thence, the next stage of reform propaganda used martyrological anti-episcopacy to popularise primitive, or presbyterian, administration of the church as a replacement for the corrupt episcopate.

William Tyndale's *The Practyse of Prelates* was not a scrupulous source-based historical account according to the late twentieth-century professional sense. It would be something of an anachronism to evaluate it in this way. Howerver, it is possible to see why modern historians, as representatives of that professional institution, would assume or demand that this was the intention. I hazard a guess that popular audiences contemporary to the Reformation - and the propagandists who appealed to them - would not have been concerned about efficiency in dating or reliability of sources: their concern was with the immediate effects of the corrupt practices of the regular clergy and the episcopal hierarchy on their economic and physical well-being. Reformers knew and appealed to this as a part of their attempts to popularise ideas about Protestant reform. This is why all of the texts to which I refer here

repeatedly drive at the financial liberties of the church and its bishops. Accounts are given of how people like merchant tailors (Hunne), gentlemen, husbandmen and preachers suffered poverty because of the corrupt practices of the church hierarchy. In many texts, including Barlow's *Dialogue* and Fish's *Supplication*, detailed financial lists are given. Neither the *Dialogue*, nor *The Practyse of Prelates* are poor history, they are effective propaganda.

That Tyndale was aware not only of the importance of propaganda, but of the caution that should be exercised in the selection and presentation of material is revealed in one of his letters to the imprisoned martyr John Frith in 1533. 'Of the presence of Christes body in the Sacrament', Tyndale warns Frith,

> medle as litle as you can, that there appeare no diuision among vs. Barnes will be whote agaynst you. The Saxons be sore on the affirmativue, whether constant or obstinate,I omit it to God. ... George Ioye would haue put foorth a treatise of the matter, but I haue stopt hym as yet, what he will doe if he get money, I wote not. I beleue he wold make many reasons litle seruyng to the purpose. My mynde is, that nothyng be put forth till we heare how you shal haue spede. I would haue the right vse preached, and the presence to be a indefferent thyng, till the matter might be resoned in peace at laysure, of both parties.[64]

In this letter Tyndale revealed how well aware he was that propaganda was to be carefully targeted. He knew that Robert Barnes - also a prominent reformer - would disagree with Frith over the issue of transubstantiation if it were raised as part of Frith's public trial, and that this would only have made the reformers' cause look ridiculous to others. It was for the same reason of wanting to portray the reformers as united in their belief that he prevented the publication and circulation of George Joye's treatise on the sacrament *The true beliefe in Christ and his sacramentes,*[65] as he informed Frith here.

Rather than evaluating the 'history' in these texts according to some anachronistically fixed notion of historical scholarship, seeing them as evidence

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[64] John Foxe (ed.), *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes* (London: Iohn Daye, 1573), sig. CC.iiii[r].

[65] (London: Gwalter Lynne, 1550).

of the dialogue between the reformers and the established church can provide new ways of understanding them. Following the Scribnerian lead on the workings and effects of German Reform propaganda, I will show how English reformers selected certain iconic episcopal activities as material for anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda.

William Tyndale's *The Practyse of Prelates* supports my claim that 'anti-clericalism' was naturally highly critical of the existing English bishops. Two important sections of Tyndale's 1530 book in this respect are entitled 'The officers ordained by the Apostles' and 'How the Prelates fell from Christ'. In these consecutive sections Tyndale analysed the office of the English bishops by subjecting it to a scriptural analysis and comparing it to the same office as it was established and existed in the primitive church. He begins by explaining the etymology of the word 'bishop' and showing the original functions that the office designated. He says:

> ... y^{e} apostles folowing + obeyng y^{e} rule doctrine + commaundment of oure sauiour Jesus Christ their master, ordened in his kingdome and congregacion two officers: One called after y^{e} greke worde bishop, in english an ouersear: which same was called preast after y^{e} greke, elder in english because of his age discrecion + sadnesse: for he was as nigh as coude be alwaye an elderly man.[66]

Tyndale used comparative linguistic techniques to show that in the Greek Bible the words 'bishop' and 'priest' were synonymous, and designated a wise, elderly overseer within the church. In this way Tyndale attacked the authority that contemporary English bishops exercised over the rest of the clergy by saying that the primitive, and by implication most pure, church made no such distinction of authority between the two offices. In *The Letters which Johan Ashwel Priour of Newnham Abbey beside Bedforde/ sente secretely to the Bishope of Lyncolne* (1529),[67] George Joye made exactly the same point when

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[66] William Tyndale, *The practyse of Prelates. Whether the Kinges grace maye be separated from hys quene because she was his brothers wyfe* (Marborch[: H.Luft], 1530), sig.B.iiii.[r].

[67] George Joye, *The Letters which Johan Ashwel Priour of Newnham Abbey beside Bedforde*

he invested his work on translating the Bible in his attack on John Longland and other bishops to whom he was called for examination. In his book Joye's exegetical discussions include the point that in the Scripture 'presbyter' and 'episcopus' are used interchangeably and are therefore simply different words signifying the same minister of the church.[68] This was a refutation of the Catholic and episcopal apologists' argument that the use of 'episcopus' in the Scripture differentiated a bishop from a priest. It shows how both Tyndale and Joye made use of their knowledge of translating and editing to attack episcopacy. Tri-lingual (Greek, Latin and English) analysis of the Bible revealed that the functions and authority of the sixteenth century English episcopate were not modelled on the church instituted by Christ. This propagandist attack was also made later in John Ponet's translation of Bernardino Ochino's *Trageodie* (1549) when he said:

> I am sure ye haue in remembraunce how that in the beginning of the churche of Christ when it was moste pure, + a longe ceason after, there were chosen aswel in Rome for to be Bishoppes such men as were moste godly, best learned in Goddes holye scriptures, and as most diligently and faithfully laboured to auaunce goddes true word and his glory, but afterwarde when good discipline began to decaye, and we had powred ambicion, darnel, and discencion into the worlde, then were chosen to be Byshoppes by their owne procuremente, not suche as were most godly, but suche as were most worldely, most ambitious and craftie, seking more their owne glory and lucre then the auauncement of goddes glorye, and the excercise of their office, rather pluckyng from the shepe their mylke, than fedyng them with good pastures. So that the name of a Byshop now, is no more the name of a verye paynfull office as it was in tymes past, but of a great pompe + dignitie.[69]

Here Ochino returned to the primitive church ('in the beginning...') which he pointed out was 'of Christ' in order to show that the bishops (Tyndale's and

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sente secretely to the Bishope of Lyncolne in te yeare f our Lorde M.D.xxvii. Where in the sayde priour accuseth George Joye that tyme beinge felawe of Peter college in Cambrideg of fower opinions: with the answer of the sayed George unto the same opinions (Strasbourg: [n. pub.], 1529). Incidentally, this argument probably derived from Joye's work with Tyndale on the first translation of the New Testament while in exile because in the commentary on his New Testament, Tyndale was unsure how to translate 'presbyter' and 'episcopus' mainly because he wanted to avoid the use of the English word 'priest' since this had such immediate associations with the Catholic clergy and therefore carried connotations of corruption and mysticism.

[68] Joye, *Letters*, sig. A.viii.^{v}.

[69] Barnardine Ochino, *A Trageodie* (London: Gwalter Lynne, 1549), sigs. .B.iiii.^{v}.-C.i.^{r}.

Joye's 'episcopi', or elders) then appointed were 'learned', 'diligent' and 'faithful'. He then claimed that, conversely, in the sixteenth century it was worldly possessions and ambition that motivated bishops ('seking more their owne glory and lucre').

It is conspicuous that Tyndale, Joye, and later Ochino and Ponet all attacked bishops by scripturally grounded reference to the design of the primitive church. The repetition of these techniques in different authors shows, I believe, a common understanding (if not an organised programme) of how to persuade their audiences of the efficacy of reform. Correspondence between these propagandist writers - which I look at below - supports this theory. Here Tyndale and Joye both attempted to describe the form that the original office of bishop in the primitive church had taken and then they showed how and for what reasons the modern sixteenth-century bishops were so different. As history this may have been suspect, but as propaganda it was very good. Futhermore, the propaganda was specifically tailored to attack bishops, the episcopi.

In *The Practyse of Prelates* Tyndale also indicated that, according to the word of God, a true 'oversear' should be elderly, discreet and sad. Tyndale stressed this latter point again when he said:

> The office of a bisshope was a roume at the beginninge that no man coueted and that no man durst take vpon him, saue he only which loued christ better then his awne liffe. For as Christ sayeth that no man might be his disciple excepte that he were readye to forsake lyfe and all: euen so might that officer be sure that it wolde cost him his lyfe at one tyme or another for beringe recorde vnto the truth. But after that the multiude [sic] of the christens were encreased and manye greate men had receaued the faithe, than both londes and rentes as well as other goodes were geuen vnto the mayntenaunce as well of the clergye as of the poore: because they gaue then no tythes to the preastes, nor yet nowe doo saue in certayne contree, for it is to moch to geue almess, offringes, landes and tithes also. And then the bisshopes made them substitutes vnder them to helpe them, whiche they called preast, and kepte the name bisshope vnto them selues.[70]

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70 Tyndale, *Practyse*, sig.B.vi.[r].

Tyndale's explanation that the 'office of a bisshope' was one that 'no man coueted' was an indirect attack on the covetous pursuit of episcopal office by contemporaries because of the temporal wealth and power that then came with it. Here Tyndale also gave an explanation of how bishops, first, acquired land ('both londes and rentes as well as other goodes were geuen vnto the mayntenaunce as well of the clergye as of the poore') and, second, distinguished themselves from 'preast'[s]. This latter point reaffirmed Tyndale's assertion that 'bishop' ('episcopus') and 'priest' ('presbyter') originally signified the same office of an elder. In the initial stages of the propaganda that set out to create a new signified of the linguistic sign 'bishop', Tyndale attacked the temporal possessions of English bishops - land and office - and denied the authoritative hierarchical distinction that they made between themselves and the rest of the lay clergy.

In *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman* (1530),[71] William Barlow made the same attack on English episcopal land- and office-holding. Barlow's Prologue to the main dialogue, 'An ABC to the Spiritualitie', is a series of seven-line stanzas that made a prophetic[72] attack on the clergy's use of the doctrine of purgatory to acquire land and other temporal wealth. Of the temporal magistrates the Gentleman says:

> Their chefe lordshippes and londes principall
> With commodytes of their possessyon
> Vnto the clergye the[y] gaue forthe with all
> Dysheretinge their right successyon.
> Which to receiue without excepcion
> The couetous clergy made no denay
> Sayenge that they wold for their soules pray.[73]

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[71] William Barlow, *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche complaynynge to other their miserable calmite through the ambicion of the clergye* (Emprented at Marborow in the lande of Hessen/ by me Hans Luft/ in the yere of owre lorde M.CCCCC. and XXX.).

[72] Barlow refered to the prophecies of Esau to suggest that the church would undergo apocalyptic change in his own time. On the use of apocalypticism in this and other reformist texts see John Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth-Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman*, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 8 ([n.p.]: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978)

While, of the clergy he says:

> They haue oure aunceters lyuelood and rentes
> Their principall fearmes and eneamentes
> With temporall fredomes and libertees.
> They haue gotten vnto their kingdomes
> Many noble baronries and erldemes
> With esquyres landes and knightes fees.[74]

Here in their conversation, the gentleman and the husbandman together come to the conclusion that the doctrine of purgatory ('for their soules praye') is an elaborate subterfuge, the sole purpose of which is to alienate non-spiritual authority and wealth from the proper temporal magistrates - the Gentleman among them - into the church's own hands. This dialogue is no crude anti-clerical piece: the discussion between the two interlocutors increasingly directs itself to the episcopal office by the use of a lexical set (including 'lordlynes', 'worldly dominion') and specific examples (named bishops or Convocations), while the husbandman also reads from an old Wycliffite tract against episcopacy. Barlow's *A dyaloge* was published in 1530. Once the comprehensive inquiry into the condition of the regular clergy had been begun with the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, the next logical step - if it could be gained by those who agitated for episcopal reform - was a similar audit of the English episcopal office.

The similar argument contained in the three passages by Tyndale, Barlow and Joye suggests that, by 1530, a substantially coherent set of ideas about episcopal spiritual and temporal authority had emerged. It also shows how the reformers used certain key factors associated with bishops to forge propaganda against them. Temporal land and office holdings were certainly two - others, concerned with episcopal spiritual jurisdiction, will emerge in more detail as these and other texts are examined more closely. Reformist authors

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73 Barlow, *A dyaloge*, sig. A.iiii.[v].

74 Barlow, *A dyaloge*, sig. A.iiii.[v].

here made use of scriptural precedent and historical analysis as propaganda against the nature of the English episcopal office. Bishops, said authors like Barlow, Joye, and Tyndale, should be concerned with spiritual matters alone and even in this they acted not with absolute power but in an advisory capacity - as a respected elder.

But what exactly were these temporal lands and offices of the English bishops that the reformers exposed as corrupt accretions? The answer to this is crucial to an understanding of how the anti-episcopal propaganda worked, because it is these aspects of English episcopal office that are used to forge the reformers' standard anti-episcopal and martyrological discourses.

As I pointed out in the 'Introduction', there have been a good number of historical studies of the English episcopate since the 1950s. These vary considerably in their approach to the sixteenth century English episcopate. Some, like Felicity Heal, Patrick Collinson and Ralph Houlbrooke, are concerned, to a greater or lesser extent, with the interaction of English bishops with other communities specific to the Reformation, but none to the degree of specificity that I make here. In *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: the Struggle for a Reformed Church*[75] Patrick Collinson does begin to redress the undue emphasis placed on Foxe as the 'father' of martyrological collections in the Reformation by showing that, during the Marian exile, Edmund Grindal played a significant role in a co-operative effort designed to collect manuscripts and bring them to publication. Ralph Houlbrooke examines the new episcopal attitudes as a result of the Reformation[76] and Felicity Heal looks in detail at the

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[75] Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), pp.79-82.

[76] R. Houlbrooke, 'The Protestant Episcopate, 1547-1603: The Pastoral Contribution', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. by F. Heal and R. O'Day (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp.78-98. Alongside Houlbrooke's study see also Barrett L. Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England', *Albion*, 23:2 (Summer, 1991), 231-252.

political and social position of English bishops during the period.[77] However, there is no extensive treatment of the position of English bishops measured against the propaganda developed to attack them. Neither historians nor literary critics have read the texts I look at here with any reference to the way in which such interaction created important literary forms and, at the same time, recorded some important aspects of cultural and intellectual history.

Felicity Heal's study[78] shows that the English bishops held much the same social and financial position as the lay nobility: they were essentially major Tudor landlords. In his article on the Exeter episcopal account books, R. N. Swanson agrees with Heal in saying that the bishops of the late-medieval English Church were 'among the greatest landowners in the kingdom'.[79] In 1535 the revenues from land of four of the wealthiest sees, Winchester, Durham, Canterbury and Ely, were all in excess of £2,000 each, and collectively the 21 English and Welsh Sees held as many as 640 manors.[80] Land was primarily a source of money income for bishops - except for areas of 'demesne in hand' which were used to provide directly for the episcopal household - and this created a patron-client relationship similar to that between the lay lord and his tenants. However, unlike their lay compeers bishops were crown nominees, their land was held by virtue of their office alone (it was non-hereditary)[81] and they were often absent from the manors. Heal explains that the episcopal Sees had taken shape from two main sources: pious donations and bequests from the Saxon nobility - and this is exactly the alienation of which Barlow and

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77 Felicity Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: A Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

78 Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes.*

79 R. N. Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in the Diocese of Exeter in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:4 (Oct., 1988), 520-530, p.520.

80 Heal draws these figures from the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (1535).

81 However, it must be noted that after 1540, when the clergy could marry, it was possible for patronage to be used to carry on a dynasty.

Tyndale talk -, and rewards for feudal service from the Normans. So when Barlow said 'Their chefe lordshippes and londes principall/ With commodytes of their possessyon/ Vnto the clergye the gaue forthe wth all/ Dysheretinge their right successyon'[82], and when Tyndale said 'both londes and rentes as well as other goodes were geuen vnto the mayntenaunce as well of the clergye as of the poore'[83], they both referred to such bequests and rewards. This period of land acquisition by the English episcopate was curtailed by the Statute of Mortmain at the end of the thirteenth century. Along with the lay aristocracy, episcopal landed wealth remained largely intact until the late-nineteenth century.

In addition to landed authority and income ('temporalities'), bishops also derived income from ecclesiastical jurisdiction ('spiritualities'). These 'spiritualities came from 5 main sources including appropriations, tithes, pensions, synodals and jurisdiction.[84] Jurisdictional income itself came from seven main sources such as proceeds from visitation of the diocese, consistory court and probate receipts[85], confirmations, benedictions and vacancies of churches. Rental from land (temporalities) represented by far the larger source of episcopal income but, as R. N. Swanson points out[86] from his examination of the episcopal account books of Exeter and of Coventry and Lichfield, revenue from spiritualities was still a significant sum. For example, according to Heal, in

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82 Barlow, *A dyaloge*, sig. A.iiii.^{v}.

83 Tyndale, *Practyse*, sig. B.vi.^{r}.

84 For a fuller explanation of these sources of spiritual income see two articles by R. N. Swanson: 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in Later Medieval England: the Evidence for the Diociese of Coventry and Lichfield', *Midland History*, 13 (1988), 1-20 and 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in the Diocese of Exeter in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:4 (Oct., 1988), 520-530.

85 I examine visitation and probate in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4 below. I show exactly how these aspects of spiritual income were processed and how they were used by reform propagandists to connote persecution of the Protestant community by the bishops.

86 Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in the Diocese of Exeter in the Early Sixteenth Century', and 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in Later Medieval England: the Evidence for the Diociese of Coventry and Lichfield'.

1547 revenue from land of the episcopal Sees in England and Wales amounted to £24,900 while the total from spiritualities was £5,100; and in 1553 the contribution made by income from spiritual jurisdictional sources was significantly more of the total, with income from temporalities standing at £15,800 and that from spiritualities at £6,700.[87]

Both sources of episcopal income were used by reformers to denote bishops as worldly corrupt persecutors, whose concern was not for the cure of the souls within their diocese but for the temporal and spiritual revenue that could be extracted from it. Temporalities were portrayed as fraudulently acquired possessions that denied Christ's teaching of poverty for the clergy and that fell directly against the primitive institution of the spiritual elder. They were shown to have a corrupting influence on the duties of the bishop. Something of this has already been seen in the writings of Fish, Tyndale, Joye, and Barlow. As we shall also see, spiritualities were attacked as a means for the episcopate to practise corruption and *exercise persecution*, and it is therefore the attack on this source of income that is crucial to understanding the forging of the *martyrological* aspects of anti-episcopal discourses. As R. N. Swanson points out,[88] Heal's study (as part of a trend in historical studies that places emphasis on temporalities) tends to neglect spiritualities, although they were an important source of episcopal income. Swanson says that this neglect of spiritualities does not account for the generating of spiritual income from parishes, parishioners, and priests,[89] and consequently it 'ignores the extent to which the Church's own jurisdictional and administrative structure provided a means for generating wealth',[90] which were an important part of the bishop's income and

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87 On the relative importance of spiritualities to overall episcopal revenue see Appendix I.

88 In Swanson, 'Exeter'.

89 Swanson, 'Coventry and Lichfield'.

90 Swanson, 'Exeter', p.520.

contributed significantly to the church's economic standing.[91] For example, according to Swanson, Peter's Pence - a prominent symbol of Papal exploitation - was a useful source of income for bishops, 'the amount actually collected within the diocese bearing little relation to the amount transmitted to Rome'.[92]

Bishops also received tithe revenue from vacant churches (the lack of an incumbent meant that such revenue automatically deferred to the bishop of the diocese, or to the archbishop, in which the vacant parish or bishopric stood), and charged for the granting of licenses permitting non-residence. Both of these factors would suggest that there was little incentive for the bishops to fill vacant livings or discourage non-residence and pluralism. In the propaganda of John Bale against the reinstatement of Catholicism under Mary I, a glimpse is caught of the way in which these financial incentives to abuse episcopal duties are used in Protestant martyrological writing . In *The vocacyon of Johan Bale*, published and smuggled into England in 1553, John Bale used martyrological discourses to pitch the honest purity of his Protestant faith against the Catholic clergy of Ireland, with whom he had to contend in his appointment to the bishopric of Ossory in 1552. Among the many corruptions that he described of the greater and lesser clergy there, he specifically remarked upon the abuses that could be practised in a system where worldly wealth could be extracted by the episcopal office. In particular he remarked upon his own experience of how abuses arose from the fact that revenue from vacant livings fell by default to the bishop or archbishop of the vacant parish or diocese concerned. 'I will not here describe at large', says Bale,

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[91] Swanson, 'Coventry and Lichfield', p.1.

[92] Swanson, 'Exeter', p.523. This varied between dioceses but in the case of Exeter, *all* the proceeds from Peter's Pence went to the archdeacons.

> the subtyle conueyaunce of that greate Epicure y^e^ archebishop [John Goodacre] how he went about to differre the daye of our consecracion that he might by that meanes haue preuented me in takinge vp the proxyes of my bishoprick to his owne glottonouse vse and in so depriuinge me of more than halfe my lyuynge for that yeare.[93]

The revenue due to Bale as the episcopal incumbent of Ossory was denied him because, in delaying Bale's consecration, archbishop Goodacre rerouted that revenue to himself as if the diocese were vacant. Here Bale gave a first hand example of the way in which the Catholic episcopal system (which remained largely unchanged by the English Reformation) was corrupted by temporal concerns. The implication was that the unreformed episcopal system, that placed so much emphasis on temporal wealth, led to 'subtyle convueyance', Epicureanism and gluttony. In this passage, Bale provided a good example of episcopal malpractice executed in the pursuit of temporal wealth.

The few aspects of episcopal spiritual income uncovered by Swanson reveal that once again evangelical criticism made the episcopal office culpable for the lack of good preachers, and of pluralism and non-residence. Since spiritual income was therefore so beneficial to the episcopate and since its machinery was keenly felt in every parish, every aspect of the apparatus for visitation potentially became very important propaganda material. Because such spiritual income was collected, it is possible to see how, in the minds of a contemporary audience, references to such things as Papal domination, vacancies, pluralism, and non-residence would reify any vague anti-clericalism into topical criticism of Tudor bishops like John Longland, Cuthbert Tunstall and John Stokesley, and forge anti-episcopal sentiments among parishioners. Indeed in the texts that I examine the complex issues of parochial administration are all used as signifiers of episcopal corruption and persecution.

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[93] John Bale, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishoprick of Ossorie in Irelande his persecucions in y^e^ same - finall delyueraunce* (Rome: n.pub.], 1553), sig. C.ii.^v^.

Swanson's argument in his two articles, that this imbalance should be redressed, does not extend beyond a non-contextual concern for historical accuracy. But, for this thesis, the implications of the neglect of spiritualities are more important. Because it was an important source for generating significant wealth to the episcopal household, in reformist propaganda the machinery that generated spiritual income was subject to being depicted as a corrupt and then a persecutory machinery. This is what the reform propagandists concentrated on in their formation of martyrological anti-episcopal discourses.

The important factor in understanding why these texts constituted anti-episcopacy is to identify where the battle lines between reformers and bishops in England were drawn. All of the texts which I examine here were written by authors who found themselves in trouble with English bishops. Some of the bishops may have been sympathetic to the theological changes of the Reformation, but such sympathy did not always result in a readiness to relinquish their authority and landed wealth. Many instances of confrontations between bishops and reformers over this issue survive. Tyndale's vernacular translation of the Bible showed that a bishop ('episcopus') was no different to a minister ('presbyter'), and therefore it constituted an attack on their authority as practised in their role as landowners, regular official ecclesiastical visitors, and special commisioners. England had lagged behind many other European countries in printing a vernacular Bible by at least a generation. Vernacular Bibles were produced in German from 1466, in Italian from 1471, in French from 1474, in Czech from 1475, in Dutch from 1477 and in Catalan from 1478.[94] Earlier in this Chapter 1 have already shown how William Barlow stressed the

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[94] This information was gleaned from *Let There Be Light: William Tyndale and the Making of the English Bible*, a temprary exhibition and series of lectures in the British Museum , September 1994 - February 1995.

importance of arguments for ecclesiastical reform being 'groundyd on reason with scripture' and how this technique had been adopted according to the techniques practised by fourteenth century critics of the Church such as William Langland and John Wycliffe. From depositions and confessions of persons examined for Lollardy and the possession of vernacular scriptural passages in the 1520s, I have also shown how direct access to the Bible caused some people to develop a distinctly negative attitude to the Tudor ecclesiastical hierarchy and strong arguments against the justification for its existence. English vernacular Bibles therefore posed a serious threat to the position of Tudor bishops, and their various attempts to thwart their circulation show how well they perceived that people's unmediated encounters with the Bible made their position and authority untenable. But the appearance of vernacular scriptures was just one manifestation of a larger intellectual movement, often broadly defined as Protestant humanism, which was more difficult to suppress than simply calling in and burning books. The intellectual innovations created by the refinement of tri-lingual studies (Latin/Greek/Hebrew), the mechanics of new scholarly approaches to Biblical interpretation, produced arguments against the existing hierarchy in the English church which could no longer easily be refuted or hereticated. The invention of the printing press in 1440 and the whole secular culture that arose around this new medium in the following half-century helped to develop the mechanics of such scholarly interpretation.[95] R. Gerald Hobbs addresses this issue in '*Hebraica Veritas* and *Traditio Apostolica:* Saint Paul and the Interpretation of the Psalms in the Sixteenth Century'[96] which suggests that although the notion of comparative literature was

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[95] See Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 'The Scriptural Tradition Recast: resetting the stage for the Reformation', pp.303-452; esp. pp.314-329.

[96] In *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by David C. Steinmetz (London: Duke University

not new, the increased number of Hebraists and interest in the study of this comparative literature in the sixteenth century sharpened the issues at stake in Biblical interpretation. Hobbs argues that, although there was an earlier Hebrew grammar,[97] the publication of Johann Reuchlin's *De rudimentis Hebraicis*[98] in 1506 is a convenient moment to date the new period of Christian Hebraist exegesis. Hobbs explains that the preface to the third book of *De rudimentis* is an apology for the suggestion that Reuchlin's project calls the previous interpretations of St Jerome and Nicolaus de Lyra (noted Hebraists and biblical translators/commentators) into question. Reuchlin points out in this preface however, that Jerome and Lyra themselves were aware that they made mistakes, and Jerome also questioned the grammatical skills of the apostle Paul. Hobbs' article addresses this issue by looking at how sixteenth-century commentators dealt with the problem of quotations from the Old Testament (Hebrew) in the book of Matthew (Greek) that did no accord with the translations that a contemporary knowledge of the Hebrew would make of the same passages.[99] From this Hobbs concludes:

> The truth venerated as the written words of Scripture would confront the truth of centuries-old traditions in the life of the church. The right of the individual interpreter would be set against the authoritative teaching of the community. Within the sphere of the Old testament, assertion of the supremacy of the Hebrew original would encounter the vigorous defense of the Septuagint text tradition and thereby of the Vulgate. The consequences of this choice would pit advocates of interpretations drawn from rabbinic sources against defenders of the ancient traditions of patristic exegesis.[100]

Earlier patristic writers had also confronted this problem, but generally Augustine, Jerome and later medieval exegetes maintained the apostolic tradition, considering it to be too audacious to question the way in which the

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Press, 1990), pp.83-99.

[97] Konrad Pellican, *De modo legendi et intelligendi Hebraeum* (Strasbourg, 1504), Hobbs says that this did not have as great an impact as Reuchlin's grammar.

[98] (Pforzheim: Thomas Ashelm, 1506)

[99] Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament) are frequently quoted by New Testament authors, and Hobbs says that this is to create a link between the event of Christ and the faith of Israel.

[100] Hobbs, '*Hebraica Veritas*', in Steinmetz (ed.), p.84.

New Testament authors had made their translations. So at the beginning of the sixteenth century new techniques in editing and translating fundamentally questioned the authority of the existing Bible while it also provided an apparatus and method that could produce new interpretations. As the custodians of the Vulgate, the Catholic church in general, and English Tudor bishops, sustained significant opposition from the Protestant writers who were in possession of these new techniques. The furor that erupted between bishops and reformers surrounding Tyndale (a skilfull Hebraist) and his project to produce an English Bible is one incident in this protracted confrontation.

However, these new intellectual and practical techniques were not exclusively available to Protestant scholars. The 'Complutensian Polyglot'[101] is a magnificent example of Catholic scholarship that used new methods of scholarship to produce editions of the Bible. This six-volume multi-lingual work reproduced the parallel texts of - no less - the Hebrew Old Testament, the Septuagint (the 2nd century B.C. Greek translation of the Old Testament) and the Vulgate; in between the lines of these texts a commentary in Latin was interspersed and at the foot of the pages there are commentaries that provide paraphrases in Aramaic on some of the Hebrew phrases. This work is similar to Reuchlin's *De rudimentis* in the way that it aims at creating a fresh understanding of the Bible through comparative literary studies and historical scholarship. As Elizabeth Eisenstein says in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*:

> The very idea of casting in the role of an archivist the prophet who was once believed to have received the Ten Commandments from God on Sinai suggests

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101 *Vetus testamentum mutiplici lingua nunc primo impressum*, 6 vols (Alcalá de Henares, Spain: 1514-1517), so called because of the adjective 'complutense' used to describe people or things coming from Alcalá de Henares and because it was produced, at the expense of Cardinal Francisco Ximenes (1436-1517), by La Universidad Complutense de Alcalá de Henares which he had founded. 'Complutum' had been the Roman name for Alcalá de Henares. La Universidad Complutense was moved to Madrid in the nineteenth century.

> how the mythopoeic scribal vision of the past was deflated by the habits of mind which were engendered by reading proof and checking copy.[102]

Eisenstein gives two examples of these changes in attitude that occurred as a direct result of print culture: firstly, the discovery that the Pentateuch was not composed by Moses and, secondly, the very important theory that errors in scribal transmission were possible. The fact that mistakes could have been made during scribal copying meant that the Vulgate could well be corrupt. In addition to the idea that accidental mistakes could have been made during copying there was an increasing awareness that compositional bias, or even deliberate falsification of material according to occasional political situation, was possible. Lorenzo Valla's treatise on the 'Donation of Constantine' document is a good example of the way in which humanist scholarship challenged textual authority. Valla's *Declematio de falso credita et ementita donatione Constantini* (1440),[103] used linguistic analysis and historical research to argue that the 'Donation of Constantine' was spurious. The 'Donation of Constantine' had purported to be the legal means by which Emperor Constantine bestowed supreme authority on Sylvester, Bishop of Rome (314-336) over the other four patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople, because Sylvester had cured him of leprosy. In fact the 'Donation of Constantine' probably dates from the papal chancellery of Paul I (757-767), at which time the Roman Papacy was attempting to break away from the control of Constantinople. It was incorporated into the Isodorian Decretals (c.847-853) and also appears in canon law proof. The 'Donation of Constantine' was therefore one of the central documents for Roman Papal claims to sovereignty. and became one of the sites over which the battle between Papal

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102 *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, p.321.

103 For a modern edition see *The Treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine*, ed. by Christopher B. Coleman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922).

aggrandisement or territorial incursion upon Papal territory by other powers was fought. But Valla's demonstration of it as spurious was no less partisan: the *Declamatio* was written while Valla was secretary to Alfonso, king of Aragon, Sicily and Naples, who was, at the time, making claims on Italian territory against Pope Eugenius IV.[104]

Eisenstein's metaphor of the newly-opposed spaces of scribal cell and printer's workshop also considers the role of print culture in intellectual change. She argues that the space of the church, monastery or university - where previously the theologian, copyist, scribe, churchmen and monkish learning had produced MSS versions of the Bible such as the Vulgate - was newly opposed by the scholar-printer's workshop where the layman, the magistrate or prince, authors and editors could produce new versions of the Bible. It is clear that these could support a wholly different form of church government to that of Roman Catholicism or, as was the case with Tyndale's work, Tudor episcopacy. For Protestantism this meant there was a chance for a reformed version of faith to explain the errors in Biblical texts. Since reformers were usually denied access to the pulpit this explanation was often made through print, and most of the texts I look at in this thesis make, at some point, a detailed analysis of various scriptural passages and their significance. They do this using the swiftly developing humanistic resources described by Elizabeth Eisenstein and others.

Tyndale's Worms' New Testament first appeared in England illegally in 1525. The English bishops' anxiety over the potential anti-episcopacy in the

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104 In 'David the Prophet', in *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp.45-55, James L. Kugel looks at another example of the way in which political expediency resulted in the imposition of a false textual authority. He discusses the elevation of David to the position of prophet and composer of the psalms because of the political requirements of the early church.

Tyndale/Joye New Testament is revealed in many sources. For example an account in Edward Hall's *Henry VIII* (first ed., 1542) of Cuthbert Tunstall's endeavours to thwart their distribution runs as follows:

> Here is to be remembered that at this present time [summer of 1529, when Cuthbert Tunstall was on the Continent on diplomatic business], William Tyndale had newly translated and imprinted the New Testament in English, and the Bishop of London, not pleased with the translation thereof, debated with himself how he might compass and devise to destroy that false and erroneous translation (as he said).[105]

Two years prior to this, a letter of bishop Nix had revealed how other bishops were sufficiently concerned about the effects of the Worms New Testament (1525) on the position of the English episcopate. Nix's letter[106], which is dated May 1527 and included a sum of 10 marks, was a reply to an appeal from William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, to collect money from all the English episcopate in order to create a fund that could be used to buy up and burn copies of the New Testament as they came into the country. In a trenchant and convincing article[107] Thomas F. Mayer has argued that Cuthbert Tunstall and John Stokesley may well have directed and financed the kidnapping in May 1535, and execution in 1536, of William Tyndale. Mayer traces the intelligence network, and kidnapping and assassination commissions, put out on Tyndale to these conservative bishops in England. In analysing the involvement of Cuthbert Tunstall and John Stokesley in capturing Tyndale, Mayer shows that the English episcopate may well have had considerable self-sufficiency and independence from the king in the conservative reaction against the reformation. Mayer shows that Harry Phillips, who trapped Tyndale in Brussels, and Pierre du Fief, procurator-general of the

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105 Edward Hall, *The triumphant reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII* [London: Richard Grafton, 1550), ed. C. Whibley (1904), ii., p.160. Hall's *The union of the noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre and York,* of which this section on Henry VIII was a part, was first published in 1542. Whibley's text is edited from Grafton's folio edition of 1550.

106 Cotton MS. Vittelius B.IX., *f.*131.

107 Thomas F. Mayer, 'If Martyrs are to be Exchanged with Martyrs: The Kidnappings of William Tyndale and Reginald Pole', *Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte*, 81 (1990), 286-308.

Council of Brabant who imprisoned and tortured Tyndale in Vilvoorde Castle, were likely to have acted on the commission[108] from either or both of these two bishops in England. The archival material on which Mayer draws clearly supports his assertion about independent episcopal activity. What these instances of episcopal interaction with reformist activities show is a clear battle line drawn between the endeavours of Tyndale and other reformers to produce an English vernacular Bible and - on the other side - the persecutory attempts to thwart these by the English episcopate. The main way in which reformers could respond to this conflict was through anti-episcopal propaganda.

Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates* is, technically, a historical narrative in that it makes a survey of the conduct of prelates - Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and their officers - from the early church to the sixteenth century. There is a considerable amount of material - approximately 50% - on contemporary politics such as the wars with France, activities of bishops surrounding the divorce of Henry from Catharine of Aragon, on Cardinal Wolsey and on the suppression of Protestantism. Tyndale's overarching point was that the Pope and all his bishops constantly conspired against temporal lords in an attempt to usurp all power to their own kingdom. He gave several examples of the conspiracies of English bishops against their monarchs, including the example of the elaborate justifications for going to war with France compiled by Henry V's episcopal advisers in order, Tyndale said, to avert his attack on their temporal possessions. *The Practyse of Prelates* discredited the cornerstones of the Catholic episcopal hierarchy: the Petrine claim, the Donation of Constantine, the Vulgate, Canon Law and much Catholic doctrine. He also

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108 Thomas Theobald, who was sent by Cranmer to spy on Harry Phillips, claimed that this commission originally contained orders to take Robert Barnes and George Joye too.

used his history to trace the ways in which the pure system of church leadership by Doctors, Pastors, Deacons and Elders was gradually eroded until it came to be operated according to the contemporary system of the Pope, cardinals and bishops. His main argument here was that leaders of the church should not hold temporal office.

In his article 'Tyndale's *The Practyse of Prelates:* Reformation Doctrine and the Royal Supremacy',[109] Bruce Boehrer has shown that Tyndale attacked both the Papal church and the Henrician Supremacy in *The Practyse of Prelates.* Boehrer's analysis of the text reveals that Tyndale argued that royal supremacy was merely another version of the Catholic Papal ecclesiastical polity because it sought to consolidate the coercive rule of the temporal and the rule of the spiritual under one head. I concur with Boehrer on this. Tyndale gives a nutshell history of occidental religion in order to make his attack on the Papacy. But in its attack on the Henrician system, *The Practyse of Prelates* had to employ a new device. For this purpose it forged powerful anti-episcopal propaganda and martyrological discourses. In *The Practyse of Prelates* Tyndale asserted that it was not the Protestant preachers that cause dissention and rebellion in the realm but the prelates:

> Even so the preachers of the truthe which rebuke synne are not the troublers of royallmes (realms) and comen welthes/ but they that do wwekedlye/ and namlye hye prelates and mightye princes which walke with out the feare of god and lyue abhominablye/corruptinge the comen people with their ensample. They be they that bringe the wrath of god on all royalmes + trouble all comen welthes with warre/ derth pouertye/ pestilence/euell luck and all misfortune.[110]

In his *Supplicatyon* (first published 1531) Robert Barnes expressed exactly the same notion that it was the English episcopate and not the reformers that were the cause of dissension in England. By giving a detailed account of his own

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109 In *Renaissance and Reformation,* 10:3 (1986), 257-276.

110 Tyndale, *The Practyse of Prelates,* sig. A.v.ᵛ.

experiences at the hands of the bishop of Bath and others he was able to conclude that:

> theyr [the bishops'] practyse it is euydent to all that wyll se: that it is they y^{t} go aboute to make insurrectyon to the mayntaynyng of theyr worldly pompe and pryde and not the true preacher, for he entendeth to mayntayne nothyng but to brynge to lyght the moste gloryous and heuenly worde of God.[111]

In *A present consolacion for the sufferers of persecucion for ryghtwysenes*, published in September 1544 there is no doubt that George Joye's propaganda is directed specifically against the practices of the English episcopate in their attempts to curtail the reform of the English church. He named four bishops - John Stokesley (London), John Fisher (Rochester), Nicholas West (Ely) and John Longland (Lincoln) - in his account of the ways in which English reformers and, he said, the true church of Christ were persecuted. He referred to the attempts that I have already mentioned of bishops who tried to prevent the distribution of a vernacular Bible in England and of the moves of the episcopal hierarchy against individual preachers including that of John Longland against Joye himself. Joye's contention is clearly with the English episcopate:

> But yet do our bisshops compell men to recant sayinge. That where the head + gouerner professeth Chryst, there can be no persecucion. Nether is Chryst persecuted but amonge the Jewes and gentyls. Ah subtyle serpentyne seed. Wyll ye yet make vs beleue the gospell not to haue ben persecuted of you in Englonde? What thinge (I pray ye) was it, that in the Cardynall Thomas wolsaye, his days, and in the traytor syr Thomas More his tyme, beynge chanceler, and 5in Johan stokisly bisshop of Londons tyme, you persecuted, when ye presoned, vndid and brent so many and chased awaye moo for bringinge in, for readinge and for hauinge the newe Testament and other bokis of prayers out of the scripture in English: What thinge persecuted you when ye brent at Paulis crosse 500 Testaments with other holy bokis in Englisshe? What thinge persecuted ye, when ye compelled doctor barnes, Master Bilney + master Artur to bere fagots for preching ageynst the popes falsely vsurped primacye, ageynst his purgatory and pardons? Joan Fissher bishop of Rochester, after warde a traytour, then preachinge openly at Paulis crosse, and efte a nother called doctor Ridleye, stokisleis chaplen and person of fulham, bothe extollinge the popis powr supremite defendinge + mayntayninge his pardons purgatorie and his falsely vsurped power? Well I wot, that I my selfe was then by the bisshop of Lincolne called langley, by bysshop West of Ely, by Johan asshwell laste priour of Newnham abey besydes bedforde, and by syr William Gascoyne knyght and

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111 Robert Barnes, *A Supplicatyon made by Robert Barnes doctoure in diuinite vnto the most excellent and redoubted prince kinge henrye the eyght. The articles for which this forsayde doctoure Banes was condemned of oure spiritualtye are confirmed by the scripture doctoures and their awne lawe. Afte that he disputeth certayne comen places which also he confermeth with the scripture holye doctoures and their awne lawe* ([n.p.: n.pub], 1531 and 1534), 1534 ed., sig.B.i.^{v}.

> tresurer to the cardinal, persecuted + chased out of the realme, compelled to lese my college a perpetuall sufficient lyuinge, + all that I had, for sayinge. That any simple syr Johan had as great power to bynde and to lose (if he coulde preche the gospell) as had the pope him selfe that neuer preched it.[112]

Tyndale's 'preachers of the truthe' and Barnes' 'true preacher' were Protestant reformers like Tyndale and Barnes themselves, George Joye, William Barlow, William Roye and others who attacked the corruptions of the English episcopate. Tyndale's 'hye prelates' refered to Cardinal Wolsey whose activities he discussed in detail later in the book, but also to bishops such as John Longland, Cuthbert Tunstall, and John Stokesley all of whom were instrumental in suppressing reformers. Barnes' 'theyr' refers to bishops like John Longland and others who examined him. Both of these texts, then, reveal the battle lines drawn between the reformers and the bishops and show how crucial this interaction was to the progress of the English Reformation. There are many more instances of the way in which the reformers came into contact specifically with the English bishops in their attempts to make reforms, and the consequent discursive practices that they employed against these bishops in their propaganda. Robert Barnes was punished - the incident referred to in the passage above from Joye's *Consolacion* - for a sermon he had preached at St Mary's the Great in Cambridge on Christmas Eve 1525, in an elaborate ceremony and burning of banned Protestant books conducted by Cardinal Wolsey.[113] From this point on, he was constantly in and out of episcopal custody for heretical opinion and spent many years in exile, details of which appeared in his *Supplicatyon* (1531). George Joye was indicted and called for

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112 George Joye, *A present consolacion for the sufferers of persecucion for ryghtwysenes* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1544), sigs. A.vi.[r]- A.vii.[r]

113 On this see Allan G. Chester, 'Robert Barnes and the Burning of the Books', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 14:3 (1951), 211-221. Chester argues that Wolsey decided it would be expedient to publicly reprimand Barnes for the aberrant doctrinal points of his sermon at the same time as the already planned burning of forbidden Protestant books. This was conducted at the Quinquagessima ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral on Sunday 11 February 1526, at which Barnes was compelled to make a public recantation of his views and bear a faggot on his head as penance.

interrogation by John Longland, bishop of Lincoln after reports of his reformist sentiments.[114] Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop of London, sought to purchase and burn the Tyndale New Testament and preached against reform at St Paul's Cross,[115] and Stokesley was involved in the hunt for Tyndale himself - even to the point, as mentioned above, of attempting to kidnap and assassinate him while abroad.[116] All such interaction was carefully recorded and written up by the reformers in their propaganda as evidence of the way in which the English bishops persecuted Protestants through an abuse of their original office. So, while previously the passages of Tyndale and Barnes - and others like it - may have been dismissed as crude historical method or the idealisation of a 'golden age' of the church, they did in fact form a part of the frequent public conflict between the English episcopate and reformers, and revealed the development of a specifically English set of anti-episcopal discourses. They created a platform upon which the English evangelical mission could then effectively reconstruct this corrupted ecclesiastical polity.

My argument here relies on an audience who would make the link between generic terms such as Tyndale's 'preachers of the truth' and 'hye prelates' and Barnes' 'true preacher' and 'worldly pompe' and the actual bishops and reformers involved in these conflicts. But in the climate of reform, and especially in London, this would not have been unlikely. In *The Practyse of Prelates,* Tyndale mentions by name Thomas Bilney and Thomas Arthur who had run into trouble with the English bishops by contesting the grounds for Henry VIII's divorce from Catharine of Aragon. Thomas Arthur and Thomas

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114 See Joye's *Letters* (1529) and Chapter 3 below.

115 This was also put into print as *A Sermon of Cuthbert Tunstall Byshop of Duresme, made upon Palme sonday laste past, before the maiestie of our soverayne lorde kyng Henry the VIII* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1539).

116 See Thomas F. Mayer, 'If Martyrs are to be Exchanged with Martyrs: The Kidnappings of William Tyndale and Reginald Pole', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 81 (1990), 286-308.

Bilney both hailed from Norfolk, a well-known area (from surviving court depositions) of non-conformist activities like protestant evangelising and the distribution of vernacular translations from, and commentaries on, the Bible. Arthur was educated at Cambridge where he and Bilney were known for their protestant opinions. In 1526 he and Bilney were charged with heresy, and compelled to take an oath abjuring Luther's opinions. In November 1527 they were brought as relapsed heretics before Cardinal Wolsey and other bishops in the chapter-house at Westminster.[117] Both of them recanted and did penance, though Bilney later had the courage to suffer at the stake for his opinions. Arthur died at Walsingham in 1532. Bilney and Arthur were being interrogated at the same time as Joye was called to answer to certain articles by John Longland, bishop of Lincoln, and Joye mentions seeing their own examination in his *Letters* (1529), reiterating their plight at the hands of the bishops in the *Consolation* of 1544. Joye's experiences at the hands of the episcopal interrogation team in London had already been popularised by him in 1529 in his *Letters,* so the connection between general attacks on episcopacy and the many specific instances of conflict with them could easily be made.

The discursive material used to forge anti-episcopal propaganda was formed, rather than from popular cultural forms like play and carnival that Scribner identifies in woodcuts of the German Reformation, from doctrinal elements that related directly to the secular and pietistic practices that reformers and their audiences experienced in England. It was these experiences (by which I mean all the manifestations of episcopal presence in

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117 See Greg Walker, 'Saint or Schemer? The 1527 Heresy Trial of Thomas Bilney Reconsidered', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40:2 (1989), 219-238. On another of Cardinal Wolsey's confrontations with reformers see Allan G Chester, 'Robert Barnes and the Burning of the Books', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 14:3 (1951), 211-221.

the parish community) that the reformers exploited to depict themselves as persecuted and the bishops as their persecutors.

But here a word must be said on the position of bishops themselves as writers of anti-episcopal martyrology. For example William Barlow, John Bale and Miles Coverdale, all active writers of Protestant anti-episcopal or martyrological propaganda, also accepted promotion to episcopal Sees at various points in their careers. Other anti-episcopal authors - like John Philpot, one-time Archdeacon of the wealthy and powerful See of Winchester, William Turner, Dean of Wells (1550-53) under Edward VI and again (from 1560) under Elizabeth I, and Robert Barnes, one-time chaplain to Henry VIII - accepted prominent positions within the Tudor episcopal hierarchy. How, then, could these authors reconcile their anti-episcopal writing with their own positions? The answer to this is, in fact, simple, and rests on a major point of reform doctrine at which I have already looked in my discussion of the passages by Tyndale and Joye on the nature of the episcopal office. Reform propaganda, whether written by bishops or others, argued that *episcopi* should continue to operate in the reformed English church, but that their duties and practices should be modelled on the primitive church rather than continue in its present, corrupted, form. Their argument was that the wealth and power maintained and exercised by the Tudor episcopate was contradictory to the proper functions of a true 'elder' who should be learned, disinterested, unencumbered by any temporal considerations and operate in an advisory capacity only. Protestant interpretation of the Bible led to the conclusion that the Tudor episcopal office was in a deformed condition. The idea, then, was to reform rather than abolish it. It was true too that the fulfilment of episcopal duties in some of the poorest

Sees, like St. Asaph's and Bangor[118] in Wales, would be based more on a primitive notion of a serious, poor, but learned elder whose chief duties were to guide and preach to members of the church. These poorer Sees did not bring with them great wealth and political power like the richer ones of, for example, London, Whichester, Durham, Canterbury or Ely (although they could be used as a route to such richer pickings). Therefore the propagandists often pointed out how the fulfilment of duties by bishops in these poorer Sees was a sign of the true episcopal calling. In this way the holding of such episcopal offices even lay in their favour.

This is how John Bale described the situation for reforming bishops, using his own experiences as an example, in his autobiographical *Vocacyon,* published in 1553. In this record of his time as bishop of Ossory 1547-1553 Bale described the task with which he was confronted in converting the clergy there from Catholicism to Protestantism. In the preface Bale conceived of the episcopal office in the same terms as Tyndale and Joye, explaining that certain existing bishops (notably those presiding over the largest and wealthiest dioceses) were self-interested politicians unfit to act as Christian ministers, and should therefore be replaced by the Protestant notion of episcopal leadership espoused by himself. 'For thre consideracyons chefely (dere bretherne)', he says,

> haue I put fourth thys treatyse of my vocacyon to the churche of Ossorye in Irelande of my harde chaunces therin and of my fynall deliueraunce by the great goodnesse of god. The first of them is for that men shulde wele knowe that the office of a Christen byshop is not to loyter in blasphemouse papistrie but purely to preache y^{e} Gospell of God to his christened flocke. The seconde is that they shulde also vnderstande that contynuall persecucyons and no bodyly welthe doeth folowe the same most godly office in them which truly executeth it. The thirde is that they myght beholde how gracyously our most mercyfull God wyth hys power wayteth vpon them and fynally delyuereth them in most depe daungers.[119]

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118 St. Asaph's and Bangor contained 3 and 7 estates respectively as opposed to, for example, the 75 estates of Winchester or the 62 estates of Durham and Canterbury.

119 John Bale, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishoprick of Ossorie in Irelande his*

Not only did Bale clearly point out the duties of a 'Christen byshop' according to reformed ecclesiology, but he asserted too that affliction while attempting to fulfill these duties ('contynuall persecucyons'), rather than the possession of authority, status and land ('bodyly welthe'), was a sure sign of the godly bishop. Bale reiterated this same concept of what constituted a 'Christen [(Protestant)] byshop' when he adopted the first person plural to refer to other bishops like himself (as he had protrayed himself in the *Vocacyon*) who had suffered persecution. After giving copious historical and contemporary examples of bishop-martyrs, Bale included himself among them when he said:

> As we [persecuted bishops] are in most thinges contrarie to these papistes so haue we reioyces contrary to theirs. They reioyce in helthe prosperite riches and worldly pleasures for their bellies sake. We in our infirmytees afflictions losses and sorowfull crostes [sic] for Christes veritees sake.[120]

Bale's *Vocacyon* was propaganda aimed at denigrating the new Catholic bishops of Mary I's reign - it was her accession that had resulted in his final expulsion from the bishopric of Ossory by the Catholic faction there, which he described in his text. Bale clearly showed how there were two types of bishops: those who followed the corrupted Catholic/Tudor system - being persecutors and wealthy politicians - and those, like himself, for whom poverty and suffering was caused by their true calling ('vocacyon') 'purely to preache y^{e} Gospel of God to his christened flocke'. He also showed how the Protestant notion of episcopal leadership was not inconsistent with the anti-episcopal martyrology that he and other propagandists used in their texts to attack certain Tudor bishops.

In 1543 William Turner, in *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe* (which I examine in more detail in chapter 3), had already made this same distinction between types of bishops. Turner had used the extended metaphor

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persecucions in y^{e} same - finall delyueraunce (Rome: n.pub.], 1553), sig. A.ii.^{v}.

120 Bale, *The vocacyon*, sig. A.iii.^{v}.

of 'hounds' (representing English bishops) chasing the 'fox' (representing Catholic doctrine) out of England to depict the English reformation. But he also identified two types of hounds: one that, through contact with the Catholic fox, had developed features like it (was corrupted by Catholic doctrine) and no longer sought the fox out, and one that was a pure breed (like the pure, primitive church) which continued to hunt down the Catholic fox. Of the conservative bishops Turner said:

> Thes houndes loue this beast [the fox] so well that yf they can catche any other hound persewyng hym whiche is of an other kynde then they be of, that is to wit yf he haue not a payre of prik eares standyng vp, one before and an other behynde, they wyll neuer rest till they se the other houndes harte blode. They tendre thys beast so intierly and wold so fayne haue hym vnknowen, for feare that your Hyghnes shuld kill hym yf he were knowen, that they beare all men in hand that theyr is no such beaste in all our realme, and ponyshe them with many kindes of deathe that dare say that theyr is any suche beast in englond.[121]

Furthermore, I think some degree of political foresight must be granted to these writers, who were also active and prominent members of the Tudor church. It is evident that Barlow, Bale and Coverdale understood how integral ecclesiastical administration and practices were to the Tudor political structure and that to sweep away the episcopal office in one move would be disastrous. Rather, they saw the holding of episcopal office as a means to making reforms within the church.[122] For example, Barlow took on the poor See of St. Asaph's and St. David's in 1536, where, in 1542, he founded Brecon Grammar School. But in 1530 in his *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman*[123] his invective against 'prelatz + theyr adherentes' had been far

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[121] See William Wraghton (pseud.) [Turner], *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe, which more then seuen yeares hath bene hyd among the bisshoppes of Englonde, after that the Kynges Hygnes had commanded hym to be dryuen owt of hys Realme* (Basyll: [n.pub.], 1543), sig. A.ii.[v].

[122] On Coverdale as bishop of Exeter see Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). On the activities of other reforming bishops see Barrett L. Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England', *Albion*, 23:2 (Summer, 1991), 231-252 and R. Houlbrooke, 'The Protestant Episcopate, 1547-1603: The Pastoral Contribution', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. by F. Heal and R. O'Day (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp.78-98.

[123] William Barlow, *A proper dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche complaynynge to other their miserable calamite through the ambicion of the clergye* (Marlborough [Antwerp]: [n.pub.],1530).

from guarded. 'Consyderynge' Barlow had said by way of introducing Wycliffe's treatise arguing for a vernacular Bible,

> ye malyciousnes of oure prelatz + theyr adherentes whiche so furiously barke agaynst y^e^ worde of God and specially the new testament translatyd + set forthe by Master William Tyndale which they falsely pretende to be sore corrupte. That ye may knowe y^t^ yt is only the inwarde malyce whiche they haue euer had ageynst the worde of God. I haue here put in prynte a tretyse wrytten aboute y^e^ yere of oure lorde a thousande foure hundryd.[124]

Reformers, bishops or otherwise, always took exception to conservative Tudor bishops who were not prepared to rehabilitate the Church. Whether this recalcitrance on the part of conservatives was manifested in opposition to a vernacular Bible, as in this case with Barlow, or in a deriliction or abuse of any other of their ecclesiastical duties or powers, Protestant reformers - in or out of episcopal office themselves - always denounced it. The denunciation was directed against conservatism, against unreformed Tudor episcopacy, not against the Protestant conception of the true episcopal duties that had been so clearly defined by Tyndale in his translation of, and commentaries on, the New Testament and his *Practyse of Prelates.*

In *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex* Roger B. Manning has also shown how Barlow later set about the task of reforming the conservative rural traditionalism of Sussex in his more prestigious capacity as Bishop of Chichester from 1559 until his death in 1568.[125] Manning argues that, compared to other counties, Sussex was slow to reform because of the lack of sufficient numbers of educated clergy and because the government had failed to secure episcopal sanction for doctrinal and liturgical changes to the English church from three out of four of the Henrician and Edwardian bishops. Lacking this episcopal support, church fabric and orders of service had not been changed in

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124 Barlow, *A proper dyaloge*, sigs.C.viii.[r-v].

125 See Roger B. Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex: A study of the enforcement of the religious settlement, 1558-1603* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1969), p.47.

the diocese by the time of the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558, and William Barlow was the first Elizabethan bishop appointed to begin the process of reforming this conservative county.

Edwardian bishops like John Ponet and John Hooper, appointed to dioceses to replace the previous Henrician conservative incumbents, are also instructive on this point. Showing clear evidence that they were popular preachers and prolific writers of pro-Protestant polemical, devotional, and homiletic books, the careers of Hooper and Ponet reveal the implementation of what had been theorised by, for example, William Tyndale in *The Practyse of Prelates:* namely, an attempted reinvigoration of episcopal duties according to primitive precepts. In 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England'[126] Barrett L. Beer examines the careers of reforming bishops appointed under Edward VI after his accession in 1547. He argues that, while these new bishops were nominated through normal practices of patronage and court politics, their mission clearly differed from the sitting conservatives. In *Tudor Prelates and Politics,*[127] Lacey Baldwin Smith claimed that, at the beginning of Edward VI's reign, the episcopal bench consisted of 12 conservatives, 7 reformers and 7 of unknown orientation, but in 'Episcopacy and Reform' Beer argues that those 7 whose allegiance could not easily be ascertained were, in fact, also Henrician conservatives who later remained in office under Mary I. Between 1547 and 1553, 8 new episcopal appointments were made: Nicholas Ridley to Rochester in 1547; Robert Ferrar to St. David's in 1548; in 1550 John Ponet to Rochester (Ridley had been transferred to London) and John Hooper to Gloucester; in 1551 John Scory to Rochester (Ponet had been transferred to Winchester) and

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126 Barrett L. Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England', *Albion*, 23:2 (Summer, 1991), 231-252.

127 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

Miles Coverdale - replacing the conservative John Veysey - to Exeter; and in 1552 John Taylor to Lincoln and John Harley to Hereford (although Harley was not formally consecrated until May 1553).[128] These new appointments and transfers displaced many of the conservative incumbents - like Stephen Gardiner of Winchester, Cuthbert Tunstall of Durham, George Day of Chichester, Edmund Bonner of London and Nicholas Heath of Worcester - from their Sees. In discussing the work of Ponet and Hooper, Beer considers their preaching and writing activities to be essential credentials for reforming bishops. During the period of his Edwardian episcopal incumbancies, Hooper published nine works that can be loosely termed as Protestant apologetics and, similarly, Ponet published four.[129] Both also appear to have been engaged in daily preaching schedules. In a letter of 1549 to Henry Bullinger,[130] written just prior to his appointment to the See of Gloucester in 1550, Hooper revealed the difficult position in which Edwardian reformers, bishops or otherwise, found themselves. On the one hand the group of conservative bishops, intact from Henry VIII's reign, used their offices to prevent any form of Protestant evangelising, while, on the other, extremists such as the Anabaptists were undermining the possibility of establishing a unified Protestant church. 'Such is the maliciousness and wickedness of the bishops', remarked Hooper, 'that the godly and learned men who would willingly labour in the Lord's harvest are hindered by them; and they neither preach themselves, nor allow the liberty of preaching to others'.[131] 'For this reason...', he continued:

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128 See Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform', esp. pp.232-3.

129 See Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform'.

130 Hooper had been in close contact with Bullinger during his Henrician exile in Zurich.

131 'John Hooper to Henry Bullinger, London, June 25, [1549]', in *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, Written During the Reigns of King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary: Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich*, ed. by Rev. Hastings Robinson, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1846-47), pp.65-6.

> ... there are some persons here who read and expound the holy scriptures at a public lecture, two of whom read in St Paul's cathedral four times a week. I myself too, as my slender abilities will allow me, having compassion upon the ignorance of my brethren, read a public lecture twice in the day to so numerous an audience, that the church cannot contain them. The anabaptists flock to the place, and give me much trouble with their opinions respecting the incarnation of the Lord.[132]

While Beer claims that the academic preoccupations of the Edwardian reforming bishops resulted in their failure to convert England to Protestantism before the accession of Mary I, credit, at least, must be given to their genuine personal attempt to redress what they (and all agitators for episcopal reform) had depicted as a dereliction of episcopal duties. Hooper understood such negligence as malevolence - rather than simple laziness - when he referred in his letter to the 'maliciousness and wickedness of the bishops' (referring to the body of Henrician conservatives that remained on the Edwardian episcopal bench). Hooper was fully aware of the ability of the bishops to make or break church reform.

Many circumstances and events in the careers of reformers who, at one point or another, were also bishops reveal that it was not necessarily insincere to criticise aspects of the Tudor bishop's office while also accepting episcopal election when it was offered. For example, John Hooper had been driven into exile by the Act of Six Articles of 1539 and, because of his refusal to wear the prescribed vestments during his consecration as Bishop of Gloucester in 1550, he was imprisoned in the Fleet.[133] Using the episcopal authority and visitation apparatus that he had received from the Edwardian administration, Hooper vigorously pursued a Protestant reformation in the dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester (which had been amalgamated in 1552) while he could.[134] In fact

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132 'John Hooper to Henry Bullinger', pp.65-6.

133 See Rosemary O'Day, *The Tudor Age* (London: Longman, 1995), p.199.

134 On Hooper's visitation injunctions and procedures while bishop of Gloucester see Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform', esp. p.243 where Beer points out that the 'consistory court sat more frequently under Hooper than under any other bishop of Gloucester during the sixteenth century'. See also, for example, John Hooper, *Later Writings*, ed. by Charles Nevison (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1852),

Hooper's Patent of appointment (with those of John Taylor and John Harley) had contained the qualification 'quamdiu se bene gesserint'[135] ('for as long as their behaviour shall be satisfactory'), indicating that, while his appointees saw his usefulness as a reforming bishop, they were perhaps aware that his zeal may have gone beyond their own purposes. Ultimately it was this clause in Hooper's Patent that served as the grounds for his deprivation and imprisonment under Mary I in 1553.[136] After a long imprisonment he was eventually burned at the stake in Gloucester on 9 February 1555.

Ponet, having been deprived of his bishopric in 1553 and having participated in Wyatt's rebellion, soon went into exile and so avoided the Marian attack on the reformed clergy, dying of natural causes in Strasbourg in 1556. John Taylor too, having sought shelter with the prominent humanist Sir Thomas Smith (1513-77) after his deprivation from the diocese of Lincoln, died naturally in 1554. But Robert Ferrar, whose vigorous attempts at reforming and evangelising in his diocese of St David's were at least equal to those of Hooper,[137] was not so lucky. He died at the stake in March 1555.

Both contemporary sources and modern studies show how anti-episcopal propagandists attacked the Tudor conservative notion of episcopacy, but were satisfied that, through their own endeavours, the primitive version of episcopal leadership could once again be established for the reformed English church. While it is not the case that all reforming bishops

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p.140.

135 See *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Philip and Mary, 4 vols. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1936-9).

136 See J. D. Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p.545.

137 In his article 'Episcopacy and Reform', Beer says it is clear that Ferrar was a committed Protestant missionary, but that his lack of political acumen seems to have rendered his reforming activities very unpopular. The 56 principal articles brought against him, along with the willing depositions of 126 different witnesses (including 34 laymen) and 68 folios of testimony, all support this claim. On Ferrar's reforming activities see BL Harleian MS 420, fos. 80^{r} - 82^{r} and 111ff.

wrote the kind of anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda I examine here, it is clear that agitators for episcopal reform - including authors of anti-episcopal martyrology - did not regard the possession of a See as hypocritical or antithetical to their mission. On the contrary, considering the authority invested in the episcopal office, it was manifest that it was only the possession of such an office that could significantly contribute to thoroughgoing change - and some reformers who advocated this policy, paid for such convictions with their lives. That the Edwardian administration perceived this as well as anyone else is borne out by the appointments and transfers made to various episcopal Sees while such changes lay within its control. Rather than episcopacy *per se,* it was unreformed Tudor episcopacy and, in particular, the conservative episcopal incumbants like Stephen Gardiner, Cuthbert Tunstall, George Day, Edmund Bonner and Nicholas Heath who were the targets of anti-episcopal martyrology.

What is evident in Protestant anti-episcopal propaganda under Henry VIII is a forging of general anti-clerical theory into an examination of the institution of the English episcopate. When understood in the context of anti-episcopal sentiment (caused by the jurisdiction and ecclesiastical revenue collection administered by bishops), it can be seen that the texts of Tyndale and Barlow began to refine pericopes of satirical and allegorical criticism of the contemporary Church hierarchy - found in William Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman,* treatises by John Wycliffe, Erasmus' *Moriae Encomium* and Skelton's *Collyn Clout* - into a narrower, more sustained anti-episcopal form. The writing of Tyndale, Barlow and their predecessors lay the logistic foundations for the creation of sophisticated accounts of anti-episcopal martyrology that were later used by authors such as John Foxe, Edmund

Spenser, John Bunyan and John Milton. The institutional analysis of Tudor episcopacy, that began in earnest around 1520, measured the authority and power of this contemporary office against the equivalent office in the primitive church and found it to be corrupted and degraded. Anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom were developed in order to expose the deformed condition of Tudor episcopacy and to gain support for a fundamental reform of the existing status and practices of English bishops. When analysed against the research on the political and judicial status of bishops, much of the writing against excessive wealth, judicial corruption and careerism can be seen to apply as much to English bishops as to the monasteries and the other regular clergy. Without a serious review and alteration of Tudor episcopacy, the martyrological propagandists asserted in their books, the English church itself could not be Protestantised.

By 1548 control over church affairs had been transferred from the Pope and his cardinals to the English monarch and his bishops, while also a large number of monasteries had been dissolved and their property appropriated to the temporal arm. Liturgy had also taken on a Protestant form. However, many reformers in England did not accept that these changes were a full expression of Protestant theology. They maintained that an Erastian church was still a corruption of the rules stipulated for ecclesiastical polity in the Bible and it was the ecclesiastical office of the bishop that was predominantly attacked for continuing this degradation of Biblical strictures.

It was the desire to have a Protestant church in England that led reformers to galvanise anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom in their propaganda, because, according to Protestant scholarship, the episcopal

leadership of the English church was non-scriptural. For reformers such as Tyndale, Barlow, and others, the English episcopate, as it existed in the early sixteenth century, had fallen victim to as many corrupt accretions since the primitive church as that of the Roman hierarchy. Henrician bishops were viewed as the main obstacle to installing a Protestant church in England, so radical Protestant reformers developed a textual stance that would enable them to oppose the punitive measures of bishops against reformers, while also supplying a clear exposition and teaching of the Protestant creed.

Chapter III: Visitation and Examination.

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Visitation and Examination

In the Preface to his 1544 edition of *A brefe Chronycle concernynge the Examinacyon of ... syr Johan Oldecastell*, John Bale took the trouble to explain to his readers the importance of MSS and printed versions of episcopal examinations. 'I remembre that. xiiii. yeares ago', he explained,

> the true seruaunt of God Willyam Tyndale put into the prent a certen brefe examinacyon of the seyd lorde Cobham. The which examinacyon was wrytten in the tyme of the seyd lordes troble by a certen frynde of his and so reserued in copyes vnto this our age. But sens that tyme I haue founde it in theyr owne wrytynges (which were than his vttre enemyes) in a moche more ample fourme than there. Specyallye in the great process which Thomas Arundell the Archebysshop of Caunterburye made than a gaynst him wrytten by his owne notaryes and clarkes tokened also with his owne sygne and seale and so dyrected vnto Rycharde Clifforde than Bysshop of London with a generall commaundement to haue it than publyshed by him + by the other Bysshoppes the whole realme ouer.
>
> Forthermore I haue seane it in a copye of that wrytynge which the seyd Rycharde Clyfforde sent vnto Robert Mascall a Carmelyte fryre and Bysshop of Herforde vndre his sygne and seale and in a copye of his also dyrected to the Archedeacons of herforde and Shrewesburye. The yeare moneth and daye of theyr date with the beginnynges of theyr wrytynges shall here after folowe in the boke as occasyon shall requyre it.[1]

This passage clearly shows Bale in the role of anti-episcopal reform propagandist at work as an archivist and editor. In this instance the archives of interest were those of the episcopal courts and their process of examination. Bale listed at least six sources from the episcopal court archives concerning the trials and execution of Sir John Oldcastle at the hands of the then Bishop of London, Rycharde Clifforde. It certainly seemed important to Bale to show how and by whom Oldcastle was persecuted. There was, he said, Tyndale's printed edition of 1530[2] ('Tyndale put into the prent a certen brefe examinacyon', which

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[1] John Bale, *A brefe Chronycle concernynge the Examinacyon and death of the blessed martyr of Christ syr Johan Oldecastell the lorde Cobham collected togyther by Johan Bale* ([Antwerp?: n.pub], 1544), sigs.A.iii.^{v}- A.iiii.^{r}.

[2] Bale is referring to one of the books of the Marburg series printed by the first Henrician exiles in Antwerp: *The examination of Master william Thorpe preste accused of heresye before Thomas Arundel Archebishop of Canturbury the yere of ower Lorde. M.CCCC. and seven. The examinacion of the honorable knight syr Jhonn Oldcastell Lorde Cobham burnt bi the said Archbisshop in the fyrste yere of Kynge Henry the fyfth. Be no more ashamed to heare it than ye were ad be to do it* ([n.p.: n.pub., n.d.]).

we can call P^1) which is based on a MS of Cobham's trial recorded by his friend ('which examinacyon was wrytten ... by a certen frynde of his', which we can call MS^1), but there are also fuller versions of the trial contained in a MS of the notary of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury ('wrytten by his [Thomas Arundell{'s}] owne notaryes and clarkes', which we can call MS^{A1}), and two MSS of Rycharde Clifforde (one 'sent vnto Robet Mascall', which we can call MS^{A2} and one 'dyrected to the Archedeacons of Herforde and Shrewesburye' which we can call MS^{A3}). MS^{A2} and MS^{A3} are copies of MS^{A1}. Bale says that he intends to make use of all of these sources in his account of Lord Cobham ('The yeare moneth and daye of theyr date with the beginnnges of theyr wrytynges shall here after folowe in the boke as occasyon shall requyre it'). Bale's account of Cobham's examination and execution is an important piece in the Protestant tradition of establishing martyrs of a 'true church'. Lord Cobham (c.1378 - 1417) was a known Lollard leader. He had the reformer John Wyclif's works transcribed and distributed, and was a patron of preachers who propagated Wyclif's views on the church. In 1409 he presented a remonstrance to the Commons on the corruptions of the clergy, and in 1413 he was condemned and executed as a heretic.[3] Thus, for Bale, Cobham was a member of the community of Protestant martyrs along with his Lollard predecessors, Wyclif, Hus and others.

The identification of a martyrological canon for the Protestant cause is nothing new, but what is noticeable here is that Bale's main sources for his book were those from the bishops' courts. Through these, as much as wishing

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According to Leslie P. Fairfield, *John Bale: mythmaker for the English Reformation* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976), pp.124-5, Bale wrongly attributed this to Tyndale.

[3] For one of the best recent studies on the challenge to the status and power of the Church in the early fifteenth century see Peter McKniven, *Heresy and Politics in the Reign of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1987).

to identify and fix Cobham as a figure martyred during the long struggle to maintain the true church, Bale wanted to disclose privileged information pertaining to episcopal practices. Bale's 'Preface' provided the *Examinacyon of Oldcastle* with manuscript evidence of episcopal judicial malpractice that was also a pressing concern in 1544. The fact that Oldcastle was a Protestant martyr was important in itself, but what appeared equally important to Bale was the fact that it revealed evidence of persecution by English bishops. I shall return to Bale as the author of books in the 1540s and 1550s that specifically exposed the machinery of episcopal jurisdiction later in this Chapter, but first I want to look at the inherited material with which Bale worked and what it involved.

Anti-episcopal propaganda that concerned itself with the functions of visitation and examination was the most prolific form of writing intended to attack English bishops in this period. Such books intervened without compromise as part of an insurgence against English episcopal authority, and they are the first examples of martyrological discourses at work. The interpretation and presentation of figures, who had been immured and/or denounced by episcopal jurisdiction, as vessels through which scripture could come to be known is evident in all these pieces. This notion of a specifically Protestant martyrological discursive style follows the theoretical explanation laid out in Chapter 1 above. It was like a double-edged sword in that, while it exposed the contemporary unreformed episcopal office as corrupt, it also made detailed homiletic scriptural glosses that served as expositions of the Protestant creed. The identification of this form of writing reveals that, when the presentation of episcopal appellants as martyrs was combined with an audit of

episcopal jurisdictional activities (as examined in the preceding Chapter), a powerful criticism of the unreformed English episcopacy was born. As I have shown in Chapter 1, its ability to subvert the authority of the English episcopal system had already become notorious by the mid-1550s.

In anti-visitational and anti-examination propaganda the visitants became visitors and the examinees became examiners. Reformers visited and examined the leaders of the official church, not in an equivalent capacity, but as learned elders according to the primitive system of church government described in the scriptures. The reformers used their discursive practices to analyse the theology and authority of Tudor bishops against their own rigorous examples from the Bible, through which process the theology of the bishops was shown to be false doctrine and their authority to visit and examine was revealed as the persecution of a community that adhered to the true faith. Scripturalism - reference to a common knowledge of Biblical stories in order to highlight the inefficacy of current religious practices - was always a cornerstone of Protestant writing, but propaganda techniques that chose to concentrate on the aspects of visitation and examination were a real breakthrough in the campaign against English episcopacy. Aspects of scripturalism in some of the authors I look at have previously been discussed by some critics, but the way it is employed in anti-episcopal martyrology created through discourses of visitation and examination has not been identified.[4] Books and pamphlets of this kind asserted that systems and procedures of examination and visitation by English bishops, and the juridical process that they signalled, were no more than a means to maintain a polluted institution that had become bloated from

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[4] For example see: Peter Happé and John N. King, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale*, ed. by Peter Happé and John N. King, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies XIV (New York: Renaissance English Text Society, 1990) and Leslie P. Fairfield, *John Bale: mythmaker for the English Reformation* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976).

successive politically exigent increments to its status and authority. This Chapter begins by explaining exactly what episcopal visitation and examination was, and how it functioned politically in England in the sixteenth century. Then I look at the texts that subverted these official procedures throughout the period under discussion.

The work of Felicity Heal and Robert Swanson, discussed in Chapter 2, has shown how the English bishops of the early sixteenth century were major landlords and figures who possessed significant judicial, legislative and executive power. This Chapter will show how the position and power of English bishops at this time was used to guide and police the English Reformation into the formation of what became the Anglican (episcopal) church. It concentrates on the fact that visitation, examination and other mechanisms of the ecclesiastical judicature reveal that the English bishops were custodians of the English church and in possession of a geographically pervasive machinery that could be used to control political as well as pietistic practices in every parish. Consistory, visitation and other ecclesiastical courts - along with the numerous officials who operated them - were ultimately controlled by the bishops and could be used by them to reach into every corner of their dioceses. Anti-visitation propaganda set out to subvert the authority of such a machinery while anti-examination devices attempted also to subvert the execution of episcopal jurisdiction after the findings of visitation. Reformer-propagandists chose to strike at the protocol of vistitation and examination used by the episcopal office for many reasons. Subversion of the authority of these offices was well-served by the scriptural typology of discourses of martrydom, it drove at the heart of the authority of the episcopal office, it highlighted the possession

of excessive temporal wealth and jurisdiction, and it created a forum from which Protestant theology could justify its position in relation to Roman Catholicism. First we should look briefly at the historical ecclesiastical institutions - and the machinery that ran them - that were being attacked through this Protestant examinatory discourse.

The 'visitation' was the visit of an installed bishop upon his diocese for juridical purposes, and had become customary in the thirteenth century; it was used as a means of maintaining and policing the social structure of the parish community.[5] As Robert Whiting in *The Blind Devotion of the People* (1989) points out, in the sixteenth century '[p]arishes constituted the primary religious milieux of ordinary men and women, and thus provided the essential institutional contexts within which they experienced the impact of the Reformation' (p.14). Aspects of piety that were familiar to every parishioner were the sacraments, ceremonies and intercessions, prayers, images, cult objects, parish churches, chapels and guilds, the papacy, religious orders and the secular clergy. For the historian and literary critic who is interested in the impact of the Reformation and its literature on ordinary men and women, then, the unit of the parish community is an apposite area in which work can begin. Here I concentrate on episcopal policing of parishes during the Reformation

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[5] For this account see, for example: Dorothy M. Owen, 'Episcopal Visitation Books', *History*, 49:166 (Jun, 1964), 185-188; Sedley Lynch Ware, *The Elizabethan Parish in its Ecclesiastical and Financial Aspects*, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science 7-8 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, Jul-Aug 1908); W. J. Sheils, *Archbishop Grindal's Visitation, 1575: Comperta et Detecta Book*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars: records of the Northern Province 4 (York: University of York, 1977). See also: G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and Rosemary O'Day, *The Tudor Age* (New York: Longman, 1995), pp.158-160 which points out that 'more and more studies assume a basic knowledge of this [the visitation] system' (p.158). On the records of Visitation and Consistory Courts see, for example, Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). On visitation articles as historical sources see: Dorothy M. Owen, *The Records of the Established Church in England*, British Records Association, Archives and the User, 1 (1970) and the 'Introduction' to W. H. Frere and W. M. Kennedy, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation*, Alcuin Club Collections XIV-XVI, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1910).

and the subversion of this in anti-episcopal propaganda. By the time of the Reformation, parish visitation had developed a complex machinery. The ecclesiastical courts of the visitation were physical spaces set up at a convenient location (often a church or other public building in one of the large towns of the diocese) that could be reached by the parishes within the diocese and run by church officials. For example, churchwardens in the parishes were responsible for collecting and reporting the misdemeanours of the parish community, and apparitors were used to deliver to offenders the citations instructing them to appear before the courts. Commissaries and chancellors were episcopal delegates appointed to oversee areas and aspects of the diocese in the bishop's absence. Tudor bishops were frequently absent from their diocese for long periods while attending government business in the capital. Some bishops are known never to have visited their diocese during their entire tenure. In literature of the period complaints were often made against archdeacons, commisaries, chancellors, churchwardens or apparitors as well as bishops, and I have given some examples of this in Chapter 2 above. These ecclesiastical officials were all delegates or functionaries of the bishops for their regular visitation or occasional examination processes, so the complaints against them should be understood as grievances against the episcopal office in general.[6] The bishop was expected to make a visitatorial survey of his diocese upon accession to his See, but there were also regular six-monthly visitation courts that were overseen by the bishops' officials - often the archdeacon (archidiaconal visitation). In addition to this, occasional visitations could be made such as for the detection of isolated cases of

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6 On this see Felicity Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: A Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.23.

religious non-conformity. Presentments made at visitation were often heard immediately at the Visitation Court, but they could also be referred to the Consistory Court or lead to more serious charges.

For the regular biennial visitation, Articles of Enquiry were sent out - prior to the arrival and establishment of the various ecclesiastical courts - which required information about the moral and legal conduct of both clergy and laity. These articles required reports on, for example, the following: breaches of the canon law and the requirement of parsons and vicars to show certificates of subscription to royal injunctions on ecclesiastical matters, and for preachers, lecturers, curates and schoolmasters to show their licences; the condition of the fabric, fittings and furniture of the churches, which included all the official books used by the church such as the Bible edition, the *Book of Homilies,* the *Book of Common Prayer,* the *Psalter*, and any paraphrases or other licensed books on Anglican church government and doctrine); licensing of parochial clergy, schoolmasters and others; conduct of churchwardens; the instances of any moral and/or doctrinal breaches by members of the laity; and occasional or personal concerns of the visiting authority which in this period frequently included requests about instances of Protestant insurgence, recusancy and charitable endowments. As we shall see in, for example, George Joye's *The Letters* (1529) and the evidence of many depositions, visitation was even more pervasive than these regular and occasional surveys of the parish. It seems that there were informers within many parishes who were ready to report back to bishops on matters concerning church reformation.

The information gathered at visitation was presented to the court officials in the form of MS books known as *comperta* (things found out) or *detecta*

(things uncovered) or both. It was the responsibility of the churchwardens to both compile and present these *comperta et detecta.* Books referred to as *liber compertorum* were a digest of the more important presentments of the kinds described above and made by the churchwardens. In addition to these books, for each visitation a *liber cleri* or *call book/exhibit book,* which contained the names of clergy, churchwardens and schoolmasters who were summoned to exhibit, and a *liber actorum* or *act book,* which was sometimes made to track the progress of correction (ie. the official verdicts, punishments and effects of the ecclesiastical courts for the visitation), were also compiled.

Under Elizabeth I the concept of visitation also extended from the episcopal visitation of dioceses to the activities of the High Commission. This inquisitorial body acted independently of episcopal surveillance, but through a similar process of policing. The main difference was that on the surface it had far greater punitive power than the standard visitatorial courts, including provision for occasional enhancement to this as the situation might demand. It is debatable how clearly a distinction should be made between the ability to punish - and, by implication the effectiveness - of these two similar instruments of control. The High Commission could levy heavy fines and imprison suspects whereas excommunication, small fines, deprivation of livings and exclusion from attendance at church were the main measures made against offenders by the standard ecclesiastical courts. However, during this period the Church courts were coming increasingly under the power of statutes made in Parliament and therefore, as the powers of the standard visitation increased as a result of delegation from a more centralised and secular source, not only does the distinction between the two bodies become blurred but the effective

power of each is greater and more politicised. It must also be noted that the power of the standard ecclesiastical court to deprive ministers from their livings would have been, in terms of financial penalty, equivalent to levying a 'heavy fine', and this measure was frequently implemented against Protestant preachers by bishops.[7]

There are several aspects here which are of significance in tracing how far visitation machinery was used for the policing not only of an established civil law and orthodox Church within the State, but also the policing of the progress and extent of the Reformation.[8] In her article on visitation books,[9] Dorothy Owen points out that the machinery of the visitation that had developed by the sixteenth century was inherited by the Reformation bishops and used by them as an instrument for the maintenance of the religious settlement under Elizabeth I, and in *The Elizabethan Parish in its Ecclesiastical and Financial Aspects* Sedley Lynch Ware claims that the Church courts exercised as much legal authority in the administration of the parish as did Justices of the Peace (magistrates of the civil law) and that indeed the ecclesiastical courts' power was not limited to moral or spiritual suasion.[10] As we shall see this is also very much the case during the Henrician Reformation as well as under Edward VI and Mary I.

When compared to those made during the Reformation, a cursory glance at 'Articles of Enquiry' belonging to visitations from the late fifteenth or

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7 See *Select Statutes and Other Constitutional Documents*, ed. by G. W. Prothero, 4th edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), pp.227-242 for the statutes defining the Court of High Commission for England in 1559, 1562, 1572, 1576 and 1601 and for Wales in 1579.

8 On the changed priorities of episcopal visitation articles as a result of Reformation politics see Appendices II and III.

9 Dorothy M. Owen, 'Episcopal Visitation Books', *History*, 49:166 (Jun, 1964), 185-188.

10 Ware, *The Elizabethan Parish*, p.20. For further discussions of the relative power and authority of the civil and ecclesiastical courts in the sixteenth century see: G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.163-232; R. H. Helmholz, *Roman Canon Law in Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. pp.28-54.

early sixteenth century provides ample evidence of the use of visitation apparatus to control the English Reformation. For example, in a set of visitation articles from 1498[11] - before Church reformation had begun in England - the main concerns were with the upkeep of the church ('[w]hether the Roffe, covering, or ony Ornamentys lacke Reparacyon') and parish finances relating to it ('[y]f Rentys assigned to a Lyght be converted into other Uses agaynst the Wyll of the Gyver or Bequyther'), the simple fulfilling of the duties of the priest/chaplain ('[y]f ony of the Parysshens decease without Baptym [sic] in the defaut of the Pryeste'), and the moral conduct of him ('[w]hether ony Chapeleyn haunt ony Houses of suspect Woman'), other church officers ('[w]hether the Person, Vicar, or Chapleyns byen common Visiters and Haunters of Tavernes, or moche dronken, or bere Wepen contrary to the Peace') and his parishioners ([w]hether there by ony Usurers, Wythces, or ony that usen Incantacyons'). On the other hand, the articles of enquiry for episcopal visitation in one example from 1574[12] are dominated by items relating to enforcing a theological conformity and a sacramental and liturgical order as set out in the Elizabethan *Book of Common Prayer.* The latter shows how visitation machinery was used to police the Reformation and enforce an official practice. One 'Item' from 1498 enquired 'Whether Vestimentys and other Ornamentys belongyng to the Aulter, namely, Corporassys, upon whiche the Body of Cryst restyd that be halowed, ben clene wasshen'.[13] The question here was not about the *efficacy* of vestments or the sacrament - a prominent point of altercation between Catholic and Protestant doctrine - but simply whether they were kept clean. In 1574, the

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11 John Strype, (ed.), 'Articles of Visitation about the Year 1498', in *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, 2 vols. (London: A. Churchill et. al., 1720), II, v, pp.28-9.

12 'Articles given in charge to the Churchwardens and sidemen in the diocesse of Chichester in the visitation holden [at] Lewes'. Taken from *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. by Albert Peel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), I, p.220.

13 John Strype (ed.), 'Articles of Visitation about the Year 1498', p.28.

concern was very different: one item enquired whether clergy 'preach, read, or catechize in the church or else do not 4 times in the yere at the least saye service and minister the sacraments according to the book of common prayer', while another asked whether 'preachers or others within do not [at] all tymes use the surplice and such kinde of apparell as is prescribed in the booke of advertisements and her ma^{ties} injunctions anno primo'.[14] In these latter items, visitation machinery was clearly being adapted to meet contemporary concerns and was used to force clergy to conform to a particular settlement of Reformation issues - in this case according to the statutes and liturgy prescribed under Elizabeth I. The article on preaching and ministering the sacraments asked for information on licenses, the form and content of preaching and the extent of obedience to the official reformed church ceremonial as given in the *Book of Common Prayer.* Refusal to wear the surplice was a common position that Protestant reformers took up against the Elizabethan church settlement,[15] and the pressure from the authorities for conformity in this issue (as shown in the second article, on apparel) shows a running battle between the English orthodox reformed church and the sectarianism that was at the heart of the anti-episcopal agitation of these decades. Article 1 of the 1574 visitation ('[whether there be any preachinge, readinge, catechiseinge, or other such like exercise in private places and families whereunto others do resorte beinge not of the same familie') demanded information on the distinctly Protestant practice of prophesying - the group discussion of the Scriptures organised essentially outside the official

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14 Peel, *Seconde Parte of a Regester,* I, p.220.

15 Along with the refusal to form the sign of the Cross at baptism and kneeling before a minister at Communion this was one of the three most common reasons for citation to appear before the consistory courts. See R. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North-West England: A Regional Study of the Diocese of Chester to 1642* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1972). The battle lines over the wearing of the surplice were drawn in the Vestiarian Controversy of the 1560s.

guidelines of the Church - which was expressly forbidden by the Queen. The fourth article from 1574 ('[w]hether the bible used in the parishe church or chappell bee of the same translation that is allowed by the Bishops') reveals anxiety over the translations and circulation in print of the Bible, and also shows a policing of any divergence from officially prescribed interpretation and doctrine that had been embodied in the English episcopal Church.

The inclusion also of both occasional and personal political concerns in various visitation Articles and *liber compertorum* shows the adaptation of a powerful tool to support the policing and maintenance of the English reformed Church; and the equal weighting in the Articles of Enquiry on concerns of the activities of clergy as well as laity demonstrates an adaptation peculiar to Elizabethan Reformation politics. In respect of both of these indicators of the sustained use of the visitation for an important process of policing W. J. Sheils, in the 'Introduction' to *Archbishop Grindal's Visitation, 1575* (1977),[16] shows that in his visitation of 1575 Grindal examined the clergy on their knowledge of the scripture, their capacity for providing sermons and their use of the catechism. Protestant arguments attached specific importance to these three aspects. As common examples of Articles of Enquiry for the 'Elizabethan parish', Ware gives inquisition into practices of pluralism and non-residence, problems over the wearing of the surplice and the forming of the cross at baptism, and the possession of licences. Again these were central issues of Reformation politics (and in particular here indicators of forms of opposition to Anglican episcopacy), which show the direct engagement of the visitation with such issues. A similar use of visitational machinery to implement monarchical policy can be found in

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16 W. J. Sheils, *Archbishop Grindal's Visitation, 1575: Comperta et Detecta Book*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars: records of the Northern Province 4 (York University of York, 1977).

the particular concerns of visitation articles of 1554-5 (as reproduced in John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1563), pp.924-5), which show how Mary I intended her bishops to use visitation, among other things, to augment her attempt to reinstate Catholicism and the authority of the Pope.

Further evidence to support this idea that Reformation bishops made a conscious use of an apparently powerful and pervasive tool of surveillance and coercion is given by the fact that, following the custom that had begun in the fifteenth-century of the churchwardens having to make the presentments of the parish to the visitatorial ecclesiastical courts, it was the sixteenth-century bishops who improved and standardised this process of detecting and presenting 'things found out' through the guidelines of the Articles of Enquiry noted above. This thesis shows how certain parishioners undermined the process of visitation through anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda. They did this with an understanding that changing the nature of the Tudor episcopal office was the only way to thoroughly reform the English church. While some alterations in doctrine were officially accepted in England during the sixteenth century, the episcopal ecclesiastical hierarchy remained largely intact. In their attempts to produce an English church with a Protestant ecclesiastical polity as well as Protestant doctrine, the reform propagandists highlighted the corruptions of the visitational apparatus in order to expose what they saw as careerism and the persecution of genuine Protestants led by the Tudor episcopate.

In 1529 George Joye was one of the first authors to deploy martyrological discursive practices against episcopal visitation and examination in his *Letters.* Joye was born at Renhold near Bedford around 1494. He was

ordained subdeacon at Newnham priory on March 3, 1515 and ordained priest for Humberston Abbey in Lincolnshire three weeks later, so he clearly had patrons among the monastic orders in this area. After being ordained priest at Humberston, Joye maintained his connections with Newnham Abbey, the prior of which, as we shall see, was condemned by Joye for spying on behalf of the Bishop of Lincoln, John Longland. At this time Newnham Abbey was a wealthy monastery - in 1170 it had 50 acres alloted to support it - which shows that under the old system Joye was doing quite well for himself, and therefore one could assume that there was a certain amount of integrity in his motives for reform. Joye initially entered Christ's College, Cambridge to read for his BA, but transferred to Peterhouse where he graduated BA, MA and Fellow. In 1525 he took his last degree of Bachelor of Divinity. In 1521-22 Joye had been licensed as 'Predicator', which meant that he could preach in and around the university.[17] In 1527 Joye had been cited to appear for examination upon certain heretical opinions which resulted in his going into exile. Joye, then, was studying at Cambridge and in contact with at least two abbeys during the 1520s, and it is likely that he was a member of the group of Cambridge reformers who met at the White Horse public house in Cambridge, commonly known by contemporaries as Little Germany because it housed this reformist group. Joye was a prominent figure among the reformation propagandists and his anti-episcopal pieces must be considered as significant contributions to the development of martyrological discourses. As well as powerful propaganda, George Joye wrote a number of devotional pieces and helped Tyndale with his translation of the New Testament.[18] The contribution of Joye to reform

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17 For this description of Joye's early career see Charles C. Butterworth and Allan G. Chester, *George Joye 1495?-1553 A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962) and William A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535*, Yale Publications in Religion 11 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964).

propaganda has not hitherto been fully acknowledged and, to my knowledge the identification of his *Letters* as forging anti-episcopal martyrological discourses has never been recognised.[19]

It would appear that *The Letters* has been largely ignored by literary critics because on the surface it seems to be concerned with a detailed refutation of the major doctrinal issues central to the Reformation. To date it has only been used by historians for material on the politics of the early Henrician reformation or plundered for anecdotal material on the early reformers and associates of Tyndale. However, as a whole this propaganda piece by Joye was framed by an important discursive practice that seriously undermined the process of English episcopal policing and examination. In doing so it also attacked the actual office of the bishop.

The *Letters* comprises a printing of a letter that Prior Ashwell sent to the bishop of Lincoln, Joye's introductory comments on this, four sections on the refutation of the four articles against him, an additional section on the inefficacy of pilgrimages, a conclusion, and an account of Joye's fate since the sending of Ashwell's letter. In this way Joye's exposition of the Protestant creed on the five

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[18] George Joye, *The Letters which Johan Ashwel Priour of Newnham Abbey beside Bedforde sente secretely to the Bishope of Lyncolne/ in the yeare of our Lorde M.D.xxvii. Where in the sayde priour accuseth George Joye that tyme beinge felawe of Peter college in Cambridege of fower opinions: with the answer of the sayed George unto the same opinions* (Strasbourg: [n.pub], 1529). The distinction between propaganda and devotional works is difficult to make with Joye because his devotional works contribute to the Protestant campaign while his propaganda contains a great deal of devotional material and theological discussion. See Joye's: *Ortulus anime. The garden of the soule: or the englisshe primers... newe corrected and augmented,* [second edition] (Emprinted at Argentine in the yere of ower lorde 1530 by me Francis Foxe)[Antwerp: de Keyser, 1530], one of the earliest English Protestant primers upon which many were subsequently based; *The Subuersio of Moris false foundacion: where upon he sweteth to set faste and shoue under his shameles shoris, to underproppe the popis chirche* (Emdon: Jacob Aurik, 1534); *A present consolacion for the sufferers of persecucion for ryghtwysenes* ([n.p.: n.pub], September, 1544). Joye was one of the first exegetes to make translations of the Old Testament - including Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesistes, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations - but his translations, although published separately, were not used in the English Bible. In 1534 Tyndale dissociated himself from Joye because, on his own initiative and without consulting Tyndale, the latter had published a new edition, with his own alterations, of the 1526 Worms New Testament.

[19] Over the course of his first chapter, Charles Butterworth gives the opinion that Joye's controversial works, which must include the *Letters* (1529) are of no interest.

doctrinal issues he discusses was framed by anti-visitation and anti-examination propaganda. The reproduction in the text of Ashwell's letter informing on Joye exposed the network of policing apparatus (visitation) as a machinery used for the persecution of Protestantism by the English episcopate. Joye's *Letters* was published in Strasbourg in 1529. It can be assumed that the series of indictments and executions for Lollardy made in 1527/8 by John Longland, bishop of Lincoln and Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop of London, as a concerted effort to stamp out radical Protestantism in Essex, would be fresh in the minds of some of Joye's readers.[20] It was the bishop of Lincoln who drew up the initial articles against Joye after receiving the missive from Ashwell. Therefore this model of episcopal policing methodology shown in the *Letters* exposed Joye's own experiences as well as the identical contemporary indictments instigated by Lincoln and Tunstall. In this way the *Letters* commented directly on the episcopal practices of policing and examination by Lincoln and Tunstall in the 1528 Essex Lollardy cases, and indeed Joye must be seen as a casualty of this purge of 1528.[21] George Joye's *Letters,* then, was not a doctrinal treatise but a carefully crafted and targeted piece of propaganda that used discourses of martyrdom to subvert the authority of episcopal examination processes.

In his letter to Lincoln Ashwell requested that his part in supplying the information against Joye was not to be revealed. Clearly, Ashwell's desire that the bishop was to keep secret his part in supplying the information had been

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[20] For example see John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials,* 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822); I, ii, pp.50-65., the depositions and confessions of Tyball and others who were indicted for heresy in 1528. The depositions show clearly the process of surveillance and examination. On John Longland see: Margaret Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: the Diocese of Lincoln Under John Longland 1521-47* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[21] Cambridge was close to the Essex border and Lollard influences that were thought to be so strong in Essex could well have reached this far.

thwarted. Somehow, although we are not told the *exact* circumstances, Ashwell's letter had come into Joye's hands. In his letter Ashwell mentioned to the bishop that he had already received a communication from the bishop's chancellor that Joye should not be allowed to preach until he had received a license to do so from the bishop.[22] It is evident that this injunction restricting Joye's preaching activity was a result of the report by Ashwell of a separate incident involving Joye. It would therefore be safe to assume that Ashwell was a placeman of the bishop or, in more crude terms, a spy authorised (and/or rewarded) to collect information (*comperta et detecta*) for the bishop. The letter reprinted by Joye informed the bishop that, after several conversations held between himself and Joye, Ashwell felt it his duty to inform the bishop of the 'heretical' opinions that Joye had been expressing. Ashwell enumerates Joye's alleged positions on several major Reformation issues: priestly authority, justification by faith, clerical marriage, auricular confession and the efficacy of pilgrimages. As if to suggest there was some urgency in action against Joye, because of the way he was publicising his views, in a postscript Ashwell added that he had heard that Joye readily discussed these issues 'at festis or yonkeres in the cowntre'.[23] In printing this letter, then, Joye was showing how the episcopal hierarchy used not only the periodic official visitation, but a network of spies and informants in order to persecute Protestantism as itemised in the five doctrinal issues and the restriction on preaching.

The notion of episcopal persecution resonated through Joye's book. He made, for example, a number of comments on the contents and sending of the letter by Ashwell before he proceeded with his refutation of the bishop's

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22 Joye, *Letters*, sig. A.iii.[r].
23 Joye, *Letters*, sig. A.iii.[r].

subsequent articles against him. He said that he was surprised to discover Ashwell's letter (suggesting that he was capable of fully trusting Ashwell and therefore opposing this capacity for 'faith' to the secrecy and mistrust surrounding the sending of the letter), but that he had subsequently realised that the prior's friendship towards him was merely a disguise for surveillance and examination. In Joye's words: 'all was to honte oute somwhat of me wherby you might thus Judasly betraye me'.[24]

Joye used the scriptural typology of Judas' betrayal of Christ - also information supplied to an episcopal hierarchy - to define his own position as a martyr. Christology, a type of anagogical writing that made specific reference to the teaching and life of Christ over and above the literal level of the text, was the predominant form of scripturalism used to create martyrological discourses. Since the Passion of Christ was the *ur*-narrative upon which all subsequent martyrological accounts were based, Christology was a rhetorically powerful way of depicting the text's hero as a victim of episcopal persecution. It therefore became the preferred second level of meaning in the propaganda of the English Protestant reformers. Joye structured his autobiographical account in these opening pages around the christological motif of subterfuge versus faith and secrecy versus openness: metaphorically, along with the most frequent reference to light and darkness, these opposites suggested the larger opposition that was made about the truth of the Protestant church against the corruption of the Catholic and English episcopal one. The play on light (Protestantism) and darkness (Catholicism/Tudor episcopacy) was later made by Joye with specific reference to Ashwell's letters when he explained that he would not normally have broken decorum by printing (making public) a private

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24 Joye, *Letters*, sig. A.iii.[r].

letter except that because Ashwell's 'letters + opinions ar sclaunderouse + blasphemouse agenst god + his truthe/ [he] maye not suffer them to be hidde in dergenes as you desyerd your moste Reuerend father to kepe them'.[25]

In their 'Introduction' to the recent edition of John Bale's *The Vocacyon* (1554), John King and Peter Happé have pointed out that Bale's scripturalism is an important element in rewriting hagiographies as Protestant martyrologies.[26] They point out that Bale's *Vocacyon* is a good example of the way in which 'the Bible provides the outstanding literary model for Bale's writings'.[27] King and Happé also talk of Biblical quotation, allusion, and paraphrase as a common feature of Protestant writing and say that the 'Bible furnishes many models for the typological pattern of the suffering of the persecuted faithful and their providential deliverance, into which Bale casts his experience and that of his fellow reformers'.[28] I suggest that this was as much true of Joye's writing as that of Bale and others, and Joye's thorough knowledge of both the Old and the New Testaments, through his various translation projects and devotional works, would have enabled him to freely include copious scriptural allusions and quotations into his texts. But I would also suggest that the notion of scripturalism in reform propaganda needs to be further explored in relation to the anti-episcopacy that is at work in so much of this writing. Early Protestant propaganda employed scripturalism (and in particular, as I pointed out above,

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25 Joye, *Letters*, sig. A.iii.[v].

26 John King and Peter Happé (eds.), *The vocacyon of Johan Bale*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies XIV (New York: Renaissance English Text Society, 1990). But see my discussion in Chapter 1 above of the need to be more specific about the nature of Protestant martyrological writing and the note that the phrase 'Protestant saints' that King and Happé use here is essentially a contradiction in terms, and that their definition of how Protestantism rewrites saints' lives is not entirely adequate. On the literary aspects in the Bible see Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, (eds.) *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Collins, 1987), which examines the genre, structure and themes present in each book of the Bible and how these have been used by other writers.

27 King and Happé (eds.), *The vocacyon*, p.10.

28 King and Happé (eds.), *The vocacyon*, p.10.

Christology) specifically to effect its attack on English bishops, and Joye's *Letters* is a very good example of this.

By citing the fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel Joye showed those labelled by bishops as 'heretics' to be 'victims of persecution' and representatives, therefore, of the one 'true' Christian church:

> I wolde...[says Joye] haue conforted my selfe and do daily as god geueth me grace with this one confortable saing of my sauiour Mat.5. Blessed ar you when men caste rebukes and sclaunderouse reuilinges vpon you/ persecuting you and reporte al maner of euel agenst you/ belyinge you for my sake: Reioyse + be glad for grete is your rewarde in heauen. This one sentence is enough to answer for me + to conforte me agenst al sclaunders and false reportis/ and euen agenst your letters as touchnge my persone + fame.[29]

In Joye's hands Ashwell's letter was not merely a slanderous and false report - this would have been a case of one person's word against another *ad infinitum* - it was a lesson in how to identify the true members of Christ's church and separate them out from its persecutors. Joye's evidence in support of this claim was based on Christ's own words as reported through the gospel according to Matthew. Such careful crafting of a martyrological discourse as propaganda directed against the English episcopate is a hitherto unacknowledged but significant contribution to the formation of what is now more commonly known in the form of the Foxean biographies.

Joye framed the *Letters* within a discourse of martyrdom, by concluding his refutation of the five articles against him with an account that he described as 'The storie of my state aftir the Bishop had receaued the priours lettres'.[30] It was this account which showed Joye's acute awareness of discourses of martyrdom and his skillful use of them as anti-episcopal propaganda. Joye narrated the course of events as follows. The master of Peter College, Master 'Eadmonds' called Joye out to his house in the country on Saturday a week

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29 Joye, *Letters*, sig.A.iii.v.

30 Joye, *Letters*, sig. C.viii.^{v}.

before advent Sunday, and showed him letters purporting to be from 'the Cardinal' (Wolsey) and signed by him ordering Joye to appear at Westminster the following Wednesday. He was scheduled to appear here with Thomas Bilney and Thomas Arthur[31] to answer 'certayne erroneus opinions'.[32] Joye described how he had to travel to London at his own expense and how he was kept waiting first for Wolsey and then for the examining bishops (John Longland and Cuthbert Tunstall) for several days. Joye told how he discovered that he had not been officially summoned to appear before the Cardinal at all, and how he therefore suspected a conspiracy, but he was sent to the bishops at Westminster where he was kept waiting and then ordered to come back at six the following morning. This he duly did but he was kept waiting again until 8a.m. and was then told that the bishop could not see him because he had to meet the Cardinal. Joye explained how this went on for days and when one day Joye was asked where he was staying he lied to the scribe because he suspected 'foul play'. Eventually he met a fellow scholar from Cambridge who informed him that he was in danger, and so Joye then returned to Cambridge to pack up and set off for the coast with the intention of going into exile. Finally Joye described all the hardships that he had encountered as an exile including his separation from all his friends and family, some of whom ostracised him because of his indictment.

It is this material that has been ostensibly ignored by literary critics and only used anecdotally by historians. But this passage is crucial in the forging of discourses of martyrdom as anti-episcopal propaganda by early English

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31 On Bilney and Arthur see Chapter 2. On Bilney's run in with the authorities over his heretical preaching see Greg Walker, 'Saint or Schemer? The 1527 Heresy Trial of Thomas Bilney Reconsidered', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40:2 (1989), 219-238, which argues that Bilney was no Protestant martyr but a radical Catholic evangelical.

32 Joye, *Letters*, sig.C.viii.^{v}.

Protestants. It was only after its formation by these writers that it was taken up and used by such compilers and writers as Edmund Grindal, John Foxe and others. The course of events as Joye described them opposed his honesty and humility to the conspiratorial and rough handling of the court of bishops at Westminster. In the way that he described the events, Joye created a compelling narrative that depicted a conspiratorial atmoshphere among the bishops and their placemen. He had already alluded to Prior Ashwell's pretended friendship for the purposes of spying for the bishop of Lincoln, as well as the typological frame of Judas Escariot's betrayal of Christ.

Joye made use of scriptural typology to depict himself as a member of the 'true' Christian church, suffering at the hands of worldly and corrupt bishops, but his narrative was not without humor, which he used to make a crucial and serious point. In one passage from the narrative of events, he set his own piety against that of the bishops by describing how his ignorance of what a 'chamber of presence' was led him to the kitchens in his initial search for the Cardinal:

> I came to a Master of mine called Sir William Gascoingue/ the Cardinalis treasurer...and he bad me go in to the chamber of presens and there doctour capon shulde present me to the Cardinal. I was but a course courtyer neuer before hearinge this terme chamber of presence ne knew where it was and I was halfe a shamed to aske aftir it/ and went in to a longe entrye on the lefte hande/ and at laste happened vppon a dore + knocked/ and one opened it + when I loked in/ it was the kichen/ then I went backe into the hall/ + asked for the chamber of presence + one poynted me vp a payer of stayers.[33]

Joye's anxious knock at the kitchen door, through which he had expected to be presented to Cardinal Wolsey by a 'doctour capon', is simultaneously entertaining and slighting of the episcopal court. Joye's sense of humour deftly exploited the coincidence of his mistaken arrival in the kitchen and the culinary reference suggested by his conductor's name. But there is also a sense in

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33 Joye, *Letters*, sig.D.i.[r].

which this humour belittles the palace at Westminster: this comic digression was essentially a derogatory comparison of 'a capon in a kitchen' with a cardinal's 'chamber of presens'. It served as a metaphor that mocked the supposed power invested in the contemporary unreformed episcopal jurisdiction. Ultimately, in the *Letters,* this was all that Joye revealed of the interior of the bishops' court at Westminster because, considering - it would appear - discretion to be the better part of valour, Joye retreated into exile abroad before ever making his encounter with Wolsey.

But there is also another purpose served by Joye's culinary interlude. Humour aside, the overwhelming size of the building and the pomp involved in his proposed meeting was stressed by this passage. Such stateliness and temporal wealth inherent in the contemporary episcopal office was also emphasised by Robert Barnes in his *Supplicatyon* (1531), which I discuss immediately below. This was an important recurrent feature of the anti-episcopal writing because it lay at the heart of the reformers' opposition to unreformed Tudor bishoprics. The opposition of Joye's humility to the plenipotent, ostentatious court he encountered at Westminster served as a further more grave indictment of unreformed episcopacy. Such experiences were a harsh reality for any respondent in episcopal courts, and the way in which the scriptural glosses invoked by Joye's victimised stance condemned his accusers reveals just how effective martyrological fashioning could be in these books. Anagogically, Joye's innocent blunder at Westminster alluded to the humility and poverty of Christ and his apostles set against the temporal courts of the Sanhedrin and the high priests.

It is also possible to see how this specifically anti-episcopal piece is descended from the previous indiscriminate attacks against the unconscionable wealth of some of the monasteries. Popular discontent with wealthy 'abbey lubbers' or 'idle monks' in a period of inflation was marshalled and refined into specifically anti-episcopal propaganda. The notion remained the same but the target became specialised. Through his portrayal of the 'presence chamber' as a shadowy unknown quantity Joye also managed to vilify episcopal examination. Because this examination chamber was portrayed in this way and because it was known to have been the place where many fellow reformers had been condemned, it was not a place where the catechised were able to receive beneficial knowledge of God, but a dark place of conspiracy, persecution and death. Joye's writing in the *Letters* created a notion of his piety as pure: a purity of light against darkness, of faith against suspicion and secrecy, of humility against pomp and ceremony, and of a denial of material wealth against the trappings and appurtenances of the episcopal court.

The martyrological discursive practice that represented episcopal examination as persecution was also utilised by Robert Barnes in his*Supplicatyon* which was first printed in 1531.[34] Robert Barnes, born in 1495, was a similar age to Joye and, as Prior of the Austen Friars at Cambridge was

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[34] Robert Barnes, *A Supplicatyon made by Robert Barnes doctoure in diuinite vnto the most excellent and redoubted prince kinge henrye the eyght. The articles for which this forsayde doctoure Banes was condemned of oure spiritualtye are confirmed by the scripture doctoures and their awne lawe. Afte that he disputeth certayne comen places which also he confermeth with the scripture holye doctoures and their awne lawe* ([n.p.: n.pub], 1531); hereafter Barnes, *Supplication.* This first edition appeared in octavo and a second edition of the *Supplicatyon* with additions was printed in quarto in 1534. All quotations are taken from this second edition because it is the fuller. The 1534 edition was reprinted (London: Hugh Syngleton) in octavo in 1550 and it also appears in *The Whole Works of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, three worthy Martyrs, and principall teachers of this Churche of England, collected and compiled in one Tome togither, beyng before scattered, + now in Print here exhibited to the Church. To the prayse of God, and profite of all good Christian Readers*, ed. by John Foxe, 2 vols in one (London: Iohn Daye, 1573). There is also a modern facsimile, Robert Barnes, *A Supplicatyon... Unto Henry VIII n.p. (1534)*, The English Experience 567 (Amsterdam: De Capo Press, 1973), which, despite its title-page, in fact appears to be taken from the 1531 edition.

also well connected with the monastic livings. But, like Joye, Barnes too was interested in Protestant reform and early in 1526 he was arrested on the grounds that a Christmas Eve sermon he had preached had contained heretical opinions.[35] His treatment by the bishops in this affair formed the subject of his *Supplicacyon,* which appealed to the king to witness and rescue him from the injustice of the episcopal court. After examination, Barnes was given an ultimatum to recant or burn, and he accepted recantation. But Barnes was still under scrutiny and eventually had to flee to Antwerp in 1528. In 1531, as Henrician foreign policy necessitated negotiations with some of the German Lutheran principalities, Cromwell invited Barnes to return to England. Barnes capitulated and in 1535 was made ambassador to Germany concerning the issue of royal divorce and remarriage, and in 1539 he was also a negotiator for Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves. Barnes' sermon against Gardiner at Paul's Cross may well have precipitated his imprisonment in 1540 under a bill of attainder and his execution by burning in the same year. Barnes, then, was a reformer who enjoyed some patronage at court when policy favoured Protestantism. But it is clear that Barnes was recurrently in trouble with conservative bishops for his reformist opinions. In support of these opinions he published many works in German and English.[36] One such book is his *Supplicacyon* and, like Joye's letters, Barnes' *Supplicacyon* shows a sophisticated application of discourses of martyrdom to create anti-episcopal propaganda.

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[35] In 'Robert Barnes and the Burning of the Books', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 14:3 (1951), 211-221, Allan G. Chester argues that the ceremony of Barnes recantation was simply a convenient addition to a ceremony for the burning of Lutheran books that had already been planned before Barnes' arrest. Perhaps this had saved Barnes from the fire in 1526.

[36] For Barnes' writings see: John Foxe (ed.), *The Whole workes of W. Tyndall, John Frith, and Doct. Barnes*, (London: John Day, 1572-3); and Legh Richmond (ed.), *The Life and Selections from the Writings of R. Barnes*, The Fathers of the English Church, vol. 1 ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1807).

The format of the *Supplicacyon* was very similar to Joye's *Letters* in that it reprinted the articles of the bishops against the author and gave accounts of his actual examination before the bishops.[37] This suggests that Protestant propagandists were forging, and held in common, martyrological discursive practices as a means to undermine the English episcopate. Such practices were developed as a response to each author's own experiences of the episcopal examination process, but were part of a common martyrological culture that vindicated the conduct and opinions of hereticated Protestants and condemned the conduct of unreformed Tudor bishops.

Barnes' *Supplicatyon* addressed several major Reformation issues that not only lay at the heart of Henrician politics, but which also contributed significantly to anti-episcopal propaganda. The first section of the book was a description of the practices of the Pope and the English bishops. It is reminiscent of Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates* in the way that it portrays the English episcopate as an instrument of Papal power, intent on usurping all secular princely power for their own worldly kingdom. But this served as an apposite precursor to the more sophisticated anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom in the methods of surveillance and examination that Barnes later described. Addressed to the justice of the king's court the *Supplicacyon* suggested that visitation and examination by the English bishops was one of the means to further the Papal usurpation of European monarchs: Barnes' constant defense was that it was only because his preaching had uncovered their treasonous practices that the bishops imprisoned and examined him. The

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[37] The main 'sections' of this book are as follows: the supplication; 'the cause of my condempnation' (including the articles against Barnes with his answers); 'the hole disputacion betwene the byshops and doctour Barnes'; and several essays on doctrinal issues. The format of the text actually differs in the separate editions. The first edition of 1531 does not contain the introductory material which relates to the discursive practices discussed here.

discursive practices that drew attention to episcopal examination processes added yet another dimension to the potential power of this text as anti-episcopal propaganda. The reprinting of the articles against Barnes, the introductory comments that he gave to these and the further description of the actual process and methods of his examination in the '[w]hole disputacion' section, all represented English bishops as persecutors of the 'pure' and 'true' Christian church. Once supremacy of this church had been assumed by the English monarch, Barnes and other reformers argued, this persecution was also treason. Barnes used anti-examination discourses to state and induce an understanding of this claim.

In his introductory remarks to the articles against him, Barnes petitioned the king as follows:

> Moste gracyous Prynce, that your grace shulde knowe, what cause of heresy that the byshops had agaynst me, for the whiche, they so vncharitably, and so cruelly hath cast me away. Therfore haue I set out the articles that were layde agaynst me, and as they were layde agaynst me, as I wyll be reported by theyr owne actes, and bookes. The whiche articles doubtles were vncharitably, and falsely gathered agaynst me, in a sermon that I made in Cambrige, in S. Edwardes churche. Wherfore I wyll beseche your grace, with all mekenes, and lowlynes, to be my gracious lorde, and prynce. And not to suffre me thus shamefully, and cruelly, agaynste all lawe, and conscience, vtterly to be vndone, and cast away.[38]

Here Barnes disclosed two aspects of the *modus operandi* of episcopal visitation. First, he specifically referred to the Act Books of the ecclesiastical courts when he said 'as I wyll be reported by theyr owne actes, and bookes'; and second he referred to the vigilant process of surveillance made on behalf of the bishops when he said that the articles against him were 'doubtles... gathered agaynst me, in a sermon that I made in Cambrige'. The 'gatherers' of the elements of Barnes' sermon were not known but would have been figures like prior Ashwell who supplied information to the bishops.[39] In the same way as with Joye, it was this gathered information that was used to form the articles of

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38 Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. F.i.[r]

39 They could well have been local churchwardens.

indictment against Barnes. Here Barnes claimed that his indictment was a result of the activities of the ecclesiastical 'courts' - controlled directly by the bishops through placemen and spies in their dioceses - and the perfidious operations of a pervasive, covert surveillance that thwarted the preaching of the true gospel.

The importance attached to preaching as a sign of the true church, as the correct response to Christ's injunction in Matthew 23, was championed by Protestant theology. Barnes' memorial reconstruction of his own examination recast pastoral diocesan administration as a perversion of justice intent on persecuting the preachers of scripture. Furthermore the bishops' examinatory practices were portrayed as acts of treason rather than as judicial procedures underwritten by the consent and authority of the king. It was the christological pericopes concerning the plots and conspiracies against Jesus by Judas, the Sanhedrin and high priests that was so effective in depicting such connotations of the bishops' actions against the reformers: through a secretive process of spying, betrayal and the intrigues of a worldly and careerist episcopate on its guard, Barnes was 'vtterly vndone' and 'cast away' 'agaynste all lawe'. This was why Barnes made his supplication to the monarch. He championed the secular law as fair and just, as opposed to the questionable episcopal motives and processes.

Thus, immediately following the above comments, Barnes begs that he be subject to the rule of the secular courts when he asks: 'of your most highe goodnes to suffre me to come to myn answere, and than, yf I can not iustifie my cause, I wyll be at your gracious commaundement, to be pynyshed after ryghte, and conscience'.[40] To a certain extent general anti-clerical and

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40 Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. F.i.[r].

anti-papal arguments resonated through this application of Barnes to be examined by the secular court. But Barnes' methodical detection and disclosure of the processes of episcopal vigilance and examination, and the martyrological narrative that this created, show how his book, like that of Joye's *Letters*, more narrowly targeted the rule of English Tudor bishops. Discourses of martyrdom were created in Barnes' text through the narrative within it that made specific reference to the episcopal prescription of the Reformation. Barnes' book sought to show how circumscription and indicting of Protestant insurgents effected by Tudor bishops was barratrous, malevolent persecution. It was the development of discourses of martyrdom in early propaganda that refocused late-medieval and Reformation anti-clericalism into English Protestant anti-episcopacy. As I have already pointed out, because texts such as these by Joye and Barnes have been brushed aside by many studies of sixteenth-century English literature, and only partially addressed by historians, this aspect of the writing, and, furthermore, its contribution to the later 'Foxean school', has not previously been identified.

There were 25 articles drawn up against Barnes, all of which he memorially reconstructed from his own examination. In a sense the comprehensivity and sheer weight of accusation against Barnes in this list of articles - apparently gathered from a single sermon - is an indication of the ruthless nature of the episcopal punitive process. The third article against Barnes appears to have been an attempted assault directed at Protestant martyrological theory, because it questioned Barnes' claim that the heretics recently burnt at Brussels were, in fact, not heretics at all but martyrs of the true church. In his defence Barnes both formulated the reasoning behind discourses

of martyrdom and represented his examiners as cruel and malicious persecutors, ravenous for violent retribution to be inflicted on their critics. Barnes described an exchange he had with the Bishop of Bath during one of his examinations. First he gave a report of what he had said about martyrs in his sermon:

> We make nowe a dayes many martyrs, I truste we shall haue many moo shortely. For the verite coulde neuer be preached playnely, but persecution dyd folowe;

and then came the response from his examiner and the ensuing discussion:

> Here dyd my lorde of Bathe inquere of me, yf I reckened them for martyrs, that were brunte at Bruselles, I answered, that I knewe not theyr cause, wherfore they died, but I rekened as many men to be martyrs, as were persecuted, and dyed for the worde of God, but he sayde, he wolde make me to frye for this. Howe thynke you by this holy prelate? was not this a charytable argument to refell [sic] myn answere with? But this was the strongest argument, that eer they vsed. And perauenture I may se the day, that this argument may be made agaynst them.[41]

Martyrs were created because of the victimisation of those who preached 'veritie'. This was Barnes' evasive answer to the bishops' charge - evasive because he only said theoretically what made a martyr, but essentially the suggestion was that the recent burnings in Brussels met this definition. The intemperate outburst in reaction to this by the bishop of Bath (that he would make Barnes 'frye for this') is a good example of Barnes' use of the discursive practice that censured episcopal examination. Barnes suggested that the bishop's ill-tempered outburst was not the reasoned, judicious response that would have been expected of ecclesiastical examiners. Such depictions of irate, irrational bishops were recurrent in the anti-episcopal propaganda of this period. They were a typological reference to Diotrephes, a church leader found in the 'Third Epistle of John' and described as one 'who loveth to have the preeminence among them [the official church]',[42] and were instrumental in

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41 Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. F.ii.[r]

42 'I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church', 3.John 1:9-10, *King James Version*.

creating anti-examination martyrology. Barnes exploited the outburst in a way that was characteristic of discourses of martyrdom by sarcastically asking if this was a charitable contribution from the bishop of Bath to the examination and, further, by humorously adding that in fact this was the strongest argument that his examiners could make against him. Barnes suggested here then that the process of examination was not part of a learned juridical process at all, but merely a display of punitive force by the bishops. Not only was the treatment of their examinees harsh and uncharitable, but it was persecutory because the bishops had no sound argument to support their indictments. The rule of the bishops, suggested Barnes through the martyrological discourse of the examination chamber, was based on the *real-polotik* of materialistic careerists and therefore their indictments, examinations and executions were persecution. Furthermore, Barnes added that, with luck ('peraventure'), the day would come when 'this argument' (i.e. Bath's malicious unreasoned outburst) would be turned against them. In fact it was Barnes and other anti-episcopal propagandists who were doing precisely this through, among other devices, anti-examination martyrology. Anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom sought to expose the details of the episcopal visitation and examination machinery and depict it - as it were, through the reformers' own visitation and examination of the episcopal court - as a process of persecution that was meted out by a (possibly treasonous) politically dominant and powerful group, who were attempting to protect and advance their own interests.

Such occasional vignettes of the 'examination chamber' were frequent in the *Supplicatyon.* They are examples of the use of anti-examination discursive practices: that is, the use of a single aspect of the episcopal jurisdictional

process to fashion a martyr, denounce unreformed Tudor episcopacy and describe the martyr's theophanic revelations. Joye's luckily unrealised entry into the presence chamber of the bishops in his *Letters* resonated through Barnes' encounters in his text. No cog in the pervasive machinery of the juridical power of Tudor bishops was spared by the anti-episcopal martyrological writing. Each aspect of the episcopal legal process was depicted as a zone in which Protestants became martyrs and theopneustia occurred. The circumstances, and, often, the divine inspirations stemming from them, formed a narrative that included scriptural allusion, scriptural citation and detailed interpretation of Biblical passages. This last aspect represented a completion of the distinctive process of Protestant martyrological writing, whereby the proscription, immuring or death of the body served as a temporary ciphering process through which the reader could come to, and understand, the Word of God as revealed in the Bible. In article VI Barnes gave his readers another view of the bishop's 'chamber' during examination, and he did this again to suggest that episcopal examination was, in fact, unlawful persecution. Article VI refered to Barnes' assertion that it was contrary to scriptural precedent for bishops to hold power over a diocese that covered a large geographical area, especially if it contained more than one city. This argument was not new and stemmed from the original Protestant argument that the Pope could not administer effectively to such a large area as obtained under the domains over which he claimed supremacy. Hence, this is another example of the way in which English Protestant propagandists marshalled and adapted anti-clerical and anti-papal polemic for their specifically anti-episcopal purposes. As I have already shown, bishops were essentially absentee landlords: frequently away from their

diocese and in some cases they did not make a single appearance inside their See during the period of their tenure. Barnes' argument against the temporal possessions of Tudor bishops was also related to the frequent charges by Protestants that the church as it existed in England was contaminated by the practices of impropriation, pluralism, and non-residence.

As part of his answer to this VI[th] article Barnes included a description of his being brought 'afore my lorde Cardinall' to be examined about the articles against him. It was common practice for an indictment to specifiy that its subject either be held under close guard or located in a place where he/she may be readily called forth, and that over the course of several days, weeks, months or even years they would be examined on the articles against them on several different occasions. Barnes was not clear about how many examinations he was subjected to, but his exchange with the Cardinal was a second individual examination, the first being the one that included his conversation with the bishop of Bath. Barnes recounted an exchange between himself and the Cardinal and then gave his own commentary on it as follows:

> I was brought afore my lorde Cardinall in to his galary, + there he rede all myne articles, tyll he came to this, and there he stopped, and sayd, yt this touched hym, and therfore he asked me, if I thought it wronge, that one byshoppe shulde haue so many cities vnderneth hym, vnto whom I answered, that I coulde no forther go, than S. Paules texte, whiche set in euery citie a byshop. Than asked he me, yf I thought it nowe vnryght (seinge the ordinaunce of the churche) that one byshoppe shulde haue so many cities? I answered, that I knewe none ordinaunce of the churche (as concernynge this thynge) but saynt Paules sayinge onely. Neuertheles, I dyd se a contrary custome, and practise in the worlde, but I knowe not the originall therof. Than sayde he, that in the apostles tyme, there were dyuers cities, some vii. myle, some vi. myle longe, and ouer them was there set but one byshop, and of theyr subbarbes also. So lyke wyse now, a byshop hath but one citie to his cathedrall churche, and the countrey aboute is, as subbarbes vnto it. Me thoughte this was farre fetched, but I durst not denye it, bicause it was of so great auctorite, and of so holy a father, + of so great a diuine. But this dare I say, that his holynes coulde neyther proue it by scripture, nor yet by any auctorite of doctours, nor yet by any practise of the apostles, + yet it must be true, bicause a pyller of the churche hath spoken it. [43]

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[43] Barnes, *Supplycatyon*, sig. F.iv.[r].

The technique of narrating a conversation and then offering a commentary upon it replicated the radical Protestant exegetical process of examining scripture and then giving commentaries upon it. The fact that this examination took place in the Cardinal's gallery was important. It echoed Joye's impeachment of the presence chamber in the *Letters,* but here Barnes also used the 'gallery' as symbolic of the temporal 'lordliness' and wealth of the episcopal hierarchy. Barnes indicated that this article concerned the bishops as custodians of the English church (pastors of their diocese), but also as landlords, because it was an attack on their temporal lands and - by implication - temporal offices and wealth. In his commentary, Barnes drew attention to the fact that his position on the subject of episcopal wealth was based on a rigorous interpretation of scripture. He mocked his interrogator for having an unreasoned, unsubstantiated argument, and he drew attention to the examination situation in which the physical power of the bishops was a threat to his own judgement and to the models set forth in the Bible. Once again Barnes' maintained an obstinate silence against the Cardinal's question as to the size of a bishop's diocese. His obmutescence relied entirely on scriptural authority here, just as it had in his response to the question over the Brussels martyrs. In this case the reference was to the interpretation of St. Paul, which affirmed that for the effective cure of souls one minister should be appointed to each city. The text immediately following this passage substantiated such an interpretation further by making reference to the commentaries of Anathasius and Chrisostom from the early Christian era, both of whom said that a minister should only have cure over a small unit for their ministering to be effective. The Cardinal retorted that the ordinances of the Tudor church then authorised such

a system and asked Barnes if, in the light of this argument, he still held this opinion, whereupon Barnes asserted that he knew of no such ordinance nor from where it derived. This, then, was a direct attack by Barnes on the system of ecclesiastical administration in England that was based on the administrative unit of the archi-episcopal and episcopal See.

In the above passage Barnes made an oblique criticism of episcopal judgement when he said that although the Cardinal's reasoning seemed 'farre fetched' (a wresting of the Scripture), he must believe it since it came from 'so great auctorite'. Barnes' knowledge of the Scripture - and his reasoned academic approach to the interpretation of it - enabled him to mock the authority of the bishops and draw attention to his examination in the Cardinal's 'gallery' as part of the larger process of persecution that had made him a victim.

Because of the martyrological anti-examination discourses that Barnes uses in the *Supplicatyon,* Articles XIX through XXIII - originally compiled against Barnes - were redirected by him in the *Supplicatyon* to become articles against the bishops. These five articles were concerned with comments about how the garments worn by the English episcopate were a corruption of the scriptural formula for attire of ministers, that Barnes was reported to have made in his Christmas Eve sermon. Barnes was stated to have preached that the English episcopal garments symbolised the corruptions of the Roman Catholic church that the recent reformation had sought to expurgate. As part of his defence, Barnes described the type of clothing to which he was referring:

> They haue myters with glysteryng precyous stones. They haue gloues for catchyng colde in the myddes of theyr ceremonies. They haue rynges, and ouches, and other ceremonies, so many that ther is in a maner nowe nothyng els in the churche, but all iewyshe maners. Wyll you make this heresy? bicause I speake agaynst your dampable, + pompous myters?[44]

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[44] Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. G.ii.[v]. The mention of precious stones here yet again recalls the episcopal move against Lollardy in 1528 discussed in Chapter 2. In a deposition surrounding these Lollardy cases John Tyball declared: 'myters, crosses, ringes and other precious stones shuld be gyven to

All the vestments that Barnes referred to here were articles of clothing and accessories worn by bishops. In Chapter 2 I have already discussed the important differences between the criticisms of vestments by, for example, Desiderius Erasmus in his *Praise of Folly* and John Skelton in his *Collyn Clout*, and these of Barnes. The discussions of vestments by Erasmus and Skelton were not part of a Protestant martyrological narrative and they were not so extensive. For these reasons, the implications of these different discussions are quite different. After this initial identification and condemnation of ostentatious episcopal attire, Barnes concentrated on the mitre and the staff of the bishop, giving a history and a description of the different types of mitres in articles XX and XXI respectively. Through the propaganda of Barnes and others these two items had become symbols of the continued presence of 'Popery' and episcopal persecution and treason in the English church. Later, in the 1560s, the Vestiarian Controversy also included the surplice of the parish ministers in its list of non-scriptural garments, with many refusing to wear this garment for similar reasons to those made against the ornate attire and accessories of the episcopal office. This issue over garments flared up to flash point in the Vestiarian Controversy of the 1560s - in which the Elizabethan reform propagandist Anthony Gilby played a significant part - and the issue over the surplice in particular became one of the three most common indictments against religious radicals - along with forming the cross at baptism and kneeling at communion - until well into the seventeenth-century. Barnes' anti-episcopal propaganda used the rich, flamboyant dress of English bishops to condemn their status and power as non-scriptural. He used martyrological

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poore and nedy pepull, then so to were them; according to the saiynge of Poule, where he saythe, *Were [wear] ye not gold, silver nor perlls, ne precious stones'*, in John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822), 'Number XVII', I, ii, pp.50-56.

anti-examination discourses to create a form of writing that would body forth this picture of unreformed Tudor bishops. Such connotations soon became symbolic of the persecution of Protestants by English episcopal visitation and examination. Thus, attacks on the garments of the Pope and his bishops served, equally, as symbols through which the English episcopate of the reformed church could be attacked. William Turner also took up the symbol of the mitre in 1543 in his *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe,*[45] when he humorously described this vestment as a convenient hiding place - because of its size and elaborate decorative folds of material - for 'Romish wolves'.

When he turned to his defence of the comments that he made about the bishops' staff, Barnes exploited the staff as a metaphor for the examination process:

> They haue baculum pastoralem to take shepe with but it is not lyke a shepeheredes hode, for it is intricate and manyfolde croked, + turneth alwayes in, so that it may be called a mase for it hath neither begynning nor endyng, And it is more lyke to knocke swyne and wolues in the heed with, than to take shepe. They haue also pyllers and pollaxes and other ceremonyes, which no doubt, be but tryfles, and thynges of nought.[46]

In the context of the Henrician Reformation - with the equivocation over the extent and form of ecclesiastical reform - and as part of the discursive practice in this text that highlights and inverts the episcopal examination process as a persecutory practice, this metaphor of the staff carried by the bishops as a tool of violent entrapment made a humorous and significant attack on the English bishops. Barnes turned the 'baculum pastoralem' from a symbol of pastoral care into the tool of a ravenous episcopate used against faithful preachers of the Christian church like himself. Barnes continued to exploit the metonymical

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[45] William Wraghton [Turner], *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe, which more then seuen yeares hath bene hyd among the bisshoppes of Englonde, after that the Kynges Hygnes had commanded hym to be dryuen owt of hys Realme* (Basyll: [n.pub], 1543).

[46] Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. G.iii.[r].

references of the staff that was supposed to be a pastoral tool and archetypally associated with Christ's attendance on his 'flock':

> I pray you what is ye cause that you call your staffe a shepeherdes staffe? you helpe no man with it? you conforte no man? you lyfte vp no man with it? but you haue stryken downe kynges, + kingdomes with it and knocked in the heed dukes and erles with it. Call you this a shepeherds staffe? There is a space in the shepeherdes staffe, for the foote to come out agayne, but your staffe turneth, and wyndeth alwayes inwarde, and neuer outward, signyfyinge that what soeuer he be that commeth within your daunger, y^{t} he shal neuer come out agayne. This exposicyon your dedes do declare, let them be examined, that you haue had to do with. And let vs se howe they haue excaped your shepeherdes hoke.[47]

The staff of the bishops that 'wyndeth alwayes inwarde' rather than having a space 'for the foote to come out agayne' found in the shepherd's staff, said Barnes, was just like the processes of episcopal policing of the English Reformation - including the techniques of surveillance, confinement and examination such as Barnes found himself in and described in the *Supplication*. Contextualised by Barnes' use of martyrological discourses and his own examination of the articles laid to his charge by certain bishops and their informers, the description of the design and application of the bishop's staff became a powerful motif within the discursive practice that denounced the process of episcopal visitation and examination.

Barnes' humour here is effective in making his point but his language is also a good indicator of the dangerous predicament in which the 'sheep' who allow their little feet to be caught in the bishop's staff will find themselves - '... what soeuer he be that commeth within your daunger... he shal neuer come out agayne'. Considering the fact that heresy was not only a capital crime but also a yoke that could be fastened to possible adversaries as a defensive move by Tudor bishops, and considering that - for certain periods between 1520 and 1560 - bishops were empowered to proceed with actions of heresy against individuals without the legal safeguard of a hearing before a common law jury,

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47 Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. G.iii.^{r}.

to be entwined in the labyrinth of the episcopal judicial system (metonymically symbolised here by the *baculum pastoralem*) was indeed a dangerous position. The title of Bishop Bancroft's history of reformist activities - *Daungerous Positions and Proceedings* -, published much later in 1593 and forming part of the title of this thesis, shows how the threatening pose of the bishops against the reformers continued right up to the end of the century. The danger that the reformers found themselves in was always present throughout the period and constantly referred to in the texts.

Later, in the section which he entitled 'The hole disputacion betwene the byshops and doctour Barnes', Barnes continued to highlight the danger of being examined by bishops. He described in more detail the exact circumstances of his 'handling' by the bishops. This section is very similar to Joye's 'The storie of my state aftir the Bishop had receaued the priours lettres' in his *Letters*, and it performed exactly the same function of encoding the *Supplicatyon* with a Protestant martyrological narrative in order to attack episcopal examination. Barnes built on the idea of the dangerous positions in which he had found himself when he said:

> I am compelled by extreme violence, thus to complayne vnto your grace, for my name, + fame, and estimacion, and all thyngs that may belonge to an honeste poore man in this worlde, is taken wrongfully from me hereby, And hath ben by the space of ix. or x. yeares, whiche is no smal tyme, compelled to lyue in mysery, + obloquy. Wherfore most gracious prynce, lamentably I cry, and cal vnto your grace, for gracious audience, + indifferent iustice. It were to longe a processe to trouble your grace with, to tell all the vncharitable handlynge, that the Cardynall, and the byshops appoynted by hym, dyd vse with me. But I wyll make vnto your grace, a shorte somme of it, as nere as I can call nowe to remembraunce. [48]

It was the 'extreme violence' and 'vncharitable handlynge' used by the bishops that had compelled Barnes to make his supplication to the king. Barnes described himself as an 'honest poore man', and so drew on, and compared himself to, the Christian typological model. This stood, of course, in stark

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[48] Barnes, *A Supplicatyon*, sig. H. i.[v].

contrast to the frequent references that Barnes had made to the 'lordship' and wealth of his examiners, the bishops. The account of events that Barnes then gave continued to emphasise the notion that Barnes' examination by the bishops was in fact persecution, a process in which Barnes became a martyr by his constant witnessing of scriptural passages.

However, in accordance with the notion that the persecuted and truly faithful should not fear bodily affliction - a concept which formed a valuable and important intellectual step in comprehending martrydom - Barnes was not afraid of the examination chamber, and he was even bold enough to propose a counter-examination of the episcopal practices when he said to the bishops, as quoted above, 'This exposicyon [of the design of the bishop's staff] your dedes do declare, let them be examined, that you haue had to do with. And let vs se howe they haue excaped your shepeherdes hoke'. Barnes was proposing to examine the bishops' own process of examination. His authority for doing this was based on the interpretation of the scripture and the martyrological anti-examination discourse. This had already led the reader into an examination of the episcopal institution and the unreformed Tudor bishops.

Joye's *Letters* and Barnes' *Supplicatyon* reveal that the episcopal examination chamber was a site of martyrdom (witnessing of God) just as much as the faggot to which the executioner applied his torch. In Joye's and Barnes' books, the Tudor episcopal palace was depicted as an ostentatious, intemperate labyrinth that enthralled Protestant victims in a web of deceit and worldly intrigue, just like the backdrop to the politically exigent plot against Jesus by the Sanhedrin, chief priests and Roman Governer of Judaea. The episcopally instigated conspiracies against Joye and Barnes were effected

through the use of, one assumes paid, spies. These, like Prior Ashwell and the unnamed transcribers of Barnes' Christmas Eve sermon, infiltrated Protestant groups and, certainly in the case of Ashwell, betrayed a trust, like Judas Escariot, for petty financial reward.

There was a distinctive narrative structure and an ever present anagogical encoding process common to both Joye's *Letters* and Barnes' *Supplicatyon*. This method of overlaying the main text with a Biblical inscription created a sub-text, or meta-narrative, which, alluding to christological and soteriological significance in the New Testament, reinforced the bearing and conduct of the heroes in the surface narrative as, *a posteriori*, divinely sanctioned. Using this textual apparatus, in both books the authors cast themselves in a christological role. By consequence, episcopal surveillance and citation led to a martyrological dilemma for the narrative's hero in the episcopal examination chamber, and thus the bishop's interrogations of these witnessing figures discredited the examiners and created conditions ripe for theopneustia and/or godly disclosure. Such holy inspiration and divine revelation inclined towards the Bible and facilitated the appropriately sanctioned exegesis of scriptural passages in support of the Protestant creed. With the fear of further episcopal proscription, the eventual escape of these heroes into hiding and exile - from where these books were then compiled - further underpinned the role of the Tudor bishops as the worldly oppressors of God's witnesses in this christological drama.

In *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe*,[49] published twelve years later in 1543, William Turner deployed the same reformist offensive as

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[49] William Wraghton [Turner], *The huntyng and fyndyng out of the Romyshe foxe, which more then seuen yeares hath bene hyd among the bisshoppes of Englonde, after that the Kynges Hygnes had commanded hym to be dryuen owt of hys Realme* (Basyll: [n.pub.], 1543).

that of George Joye in the *Letters* and Robert Barnes in the *Supplicacyon.* Turner (ca.1510-68) was from Morpeth, Northumberland, and his surviving works show that he was both a naturalist and a divine. He was ordained late in life, was a zealous Protestant, and became involved in religious conflict. He was an active preacher, writer, and translator, publishing many propagandist pieces in defence of his position in this conflict. Using a similar ecclesiastical historiography to John Bale (the argument that the Church of Christ had been corrupted by papal Rome which had used ritual, language, and dogma to lead Christ's and England's church from the truth) he wrote against the accretions present in the contemporary Catholic church in *The huntyng,* and the sequels to this which were part of his controversy with Stephen Gardiner.[50]

In *The huntyng,* Turner, like Joye and Barnes, first exposed the machinery of the episcopal examination process and then proposed a counter-examination of episcopal authority, that portrayed bishops activities as persecutory. Turner's *The huntyng* was one of a series of 'animal narratives' that employed the extended metaphor of 'fox and hound' for their attack on the episcopate.[51] The use of such metaphor was, of course, not new, but the use of anti-episcopal and anti-examinatory discourses *was* a new narrative technique. Turner's 'fox' referred to Roman Catholic doctrine. The hounds were a mixture

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[50] For a recent biography of Turner see Whitney R. D. Jones, *William Turner: Tudor Naturalist, Physician and Divine* (New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 1988). For a concise biography of Turner alongside another active protestant John Bradford, see also Celia Hughes, 'Two Sixteenth-Century Northern Protestants: John Bradford and William Turner', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 66:1 (1983), 104-138. An example of his work as a translator of Protestant works can be found in his *A worke entytled of ye olde god the newe, of the olde faythe the newe, of the olde doctryne and ye newe, or orygynall begynnynge of Idolatrye* (London: Johan Byddell, 1534). which was originally written in German by Joachim von Watt under the pseudonym Judas Nazarei as *Vom alten und newen Gott: Glauben und Lere*, and which was translated by Turner from the Latin version of Hartmannus Dulichius. This translation went through several editions in 1534, 1537 and 1538.

[51] Both Turner and Bale entered into a printed exchange with Stephen Gardiner, the conservative bishop of Winchester. See: John Bale, *Yet a Course at the Romyshe Foxe* (Zurich: [n.pub], 1543); William Turner, *The Seconde Course of the Hunter at the Romish Fox and Hys Advocate* ([Zurich?: n.pub.], 1545); Stephen Gardiner, *The Examination of a Proud Praesumptuos Hunter* ([n.p.: n.pub., n.d.]). See also: Rainer Pineas, 'William Turner's Polemical Use of Ecclesiastical History and his Controversy with Stephen Gardiner', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 33:4 (1980), 599-608.

of the English reforming bishops (that chased this fox) and the conservative unreformed Tudor bishops who attempted to protect and conceal the fox from the other hounds:

> Thes houndes [the English conservative bishops] loue this beast [the Romyshe foxe/Catholic doctrine] so well that yf they can catche any other hound [reformers like Turner, Barnes, Joye and some good bishops] persewyng hym whiche is of an other kynde then they be of, that is to wit yf he haue not a payre of prik eares standyng vp, one before and an other behynde, they wyll neuer rest till they se the other houndes harte blode. They tendre thys beast so intierly and wold so fayne haue hym vnknowen, for feare that your Hyghnes shuld kill hym yf he were knowen, that they beare all men in hand that theyr is no such beaste in all our realme, and ponyshe them with many kindes of deathe that dare say that theyr is any suche beast in englond.[52]

The 'fox and hounds' metaphor referred to the Henrician Reformation and to the way in which, despite the attempts of some 'hounds' to effect reform by driving out the Romish fox, some conservative bishops attempted to maintain Catholic doctrine and polity in the English church even after the break from Rome. The accusation that some bishops adhered to Catholic practices recalled Tyndale's and Barnes' depiction of English bishops as puppets of the Pope intent on increasing their wealth and their own supra-national kingdom. This passage pointed to the nefarious machinations and the chicanery employed by the English episcopate for this purpose and proposed to expose their 'craft'. Because of the wily, secretive characteristics that the animal is known for, Turner's metaphor of the fox was a comment on the pervasive surveillance activities of the English bishops. It even recalled the spying activities of Ashwell in George Joye's *Letters* or, as revealed in Robert Barnes' *Supplication*, the close scrutiny of Barnes in his Christmas Eve sermon by the unknown transcribers of the same, who must have been hidden somewhere among his audience. In this passage some of the 'houndes' are the unreformed English bishops who, Turner suggested, were protecting the 'Romysh fox' (Papal theology) by not fully expurgating the Catholic doctrines from the English

52 Turner, *The huntyng*, sig. A.ii.[v].

church. According to Turner, these episcopal hounds actually turned against some other hounds (the Protestant reformers) if they were seen to be of a different breed from themselves. It was the distinguishing features of the conservative episcopal breed of hound that Turner used to refer to the visitation surveillance activities of the bishops when he said that they had 'prik eares standyng vp, one before and an other behynde'. For both Joye and Barnes there were bishops' 'prik eares' where they least suspected. These hounds' ears that faced in all directions again invoked the pervasiveness of the episcopal surveillance and made concrete those gatherers of articles that Joye and Barnes suggested compiled the indictments against them in the *Letters* and the *Supplication*.

Not only this but the episcopal hounds seek the blood of the reformist ones and so 'ponyshe them with many kindes of deathe' if they dare to assert that the fox remains in England. Episcopal surveillance and examination was represented as a flagitiously reprobate practice based on support of the false doctrines of the Catholic church and certain members of the English Tudor episcopate. Such surveillance was directed against those who asserted that the fox (Roman Catholic doctrine and law) was still present in England. Turner's proposal to vie against the practices of these episcopal hounds was exactly the same as that made by Joye and Barnes. He said:

> ... if ye will of your Kyngly liberalite grant me licens to call all that the pope hath made, ordened and decreed, I shal so hunt out this beast and discouer hym, that all your whole realme may spy him, and se him, and know hym what he is, what hys name is, and where he lurketh.[53]

Turner intended to compile his own book of *detecta et comperta* (literally 'things discovered or things uncovered') - 'I shal so hunt out this beast and discouer hym, that all your whole realme may spy him' - one of which was in fact the

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53 Turner, *The huntyng*, sig. A.ii.[r].

very book to which this is an introduction, his *The huntyng*. Turner then moved on to propose the same counter-examination of the episcopal practices laid out by Joye and Barnes:

> I desyre also your kynglye hyghnes that ye will not suffer thys my doyng to be condemned of the byshoppes, till your owne lerned discretion haue tryed it and examined it with the word of god and wyth the lyght of your reason and lernyng, and then yf my hunting be found contrary to the word of god, so sone as ye fynd it so, let my huntyng be forbydden [54]

While the corrupt and treasonous English episcopate used their examination machinery to persecute, Turner wished only to examine the bishops against the scripture, he said. Not only did Turner specifically name bishops as the institution that needed to be bypassed if his examination was to be successful, but he laid out a theory for the process of examination which was based on scriptural rather than temporal authority - 'examined... with the word of god and wyth the lyght of ... reason and lernyng'. As with Barnes and Joye the episcopal processes of visitation and examination were highlighted as part of the apparatus used to persecute the true church and they were opposed by the reformers' own version of the examination process - the use of the scripture as a model by which to assess the English church militant.

In all three books, the persecution enacted by the bishops resulted in severe physical and mental pain for the victims and these victims were always shown to have been members of the true 'primitive' church. In the case of Joye and Barnes, their books were autobiographical, describing their own plight at the hands of bishops. Turner's book, however, worked on the extended metaphor of the hunting game. Just as his fox and some hounds referred to Roman Catholic doctrine and persecuting bishops, his martyrs of the true church were represented by the lamb. '[A]s it is a good coniecture', Turner explained,

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54 Turner, *The huntyng*, sig. A.iii.[r]

> yf a man be in a wood and see a great hole in the gronde to thinke that theyr haunteth or hath haunted a fox, and yf there be, by thys hole many peces of lambes skynnes, many lambes bones and gooswynges and chekens fethers. That at that present tyme there is a fox hauntynge that hole, so I thynke that yf, I coniecture that there is a Romyshe fox in the chyrche, I shall not coniecture a misse, for I sawe when I was in Englonde in a certayne chyrche a great hole in the hygh aultare which I coulde not tell for what purpose the gentle men of the chyrche haue ordened it except it be to hyde theyr father the fox in, when he is persewed after, and by thys hole I sawe a great sort of lambes bones about the aultare. I sawe certen prestes that were all most laden with lambe skynnes, and wyth tayles and peces of other beastes skinnes also. I sawe also myche gold and syluer about the fox hole. Whiche thynge made me meruell the lesse when I heard afterward that the prestes so manfully maynteyned the fox. Therfore I thynke verely that the fox is in that hole, and I dout not but that I shall ether finde hym in the bisshoppes myters or ellis in this hole or perchance in bothe.[55]

The 'lambes bones' and 'skynnes' that Turner identified stood metaphorically for the flesh and bones of the Protestant martyrs that had suffered at the hands of the English bishops. Taking into consideration the fact that some contemporary readers may well have witnessed the execution of several Protestants at the stake, the imagery here was graphic, and Turner had the bishops wearing the 'skynnes' of their victims like a cannibalistic trophy. In Turner's book, as with those of Joye and Barnes, martyrological discourse was intrinsic to the anti-episcopal polemic that opposed visitation and examination. As with all the effective martyrological reform propaganda, Turner identified a persecutor (English bishop) and a victim (English reformer). He then proceeded to show, through historical analysis, that the persecutor belonged to a caste of corrupt officials. The victim, on the other hand, was a member of the true church, that had been maintained since its most primitive form by other martyrs like him. Turner began this exposition on sig. B.vii.^{v}. This kind of explanation was based on the 'two-churches model' which appeared in Revelation. Augustine, in *The City of God,* employed the same model as did John Wyclif and John Hus in the fourteenth century. Bale discussed the model explicity in his *Image of Bothe Churches*[56] while it was implicit in the propaganda writing of many of the

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55 Turner, *The huntyng*, sigs. A.iii.^{v} - A.iiii.^{r}.

56 John Bale, *The Image of Bothe Churches* (London: Rycharde Iugge, [1548?]).

reformers like Tyndale, Joye, Barnes and, as here, Turner.[57] Such an exposé of episcopal persecution served as a platform for the reformation of English church government: and in his *Huntyng of the Romyshe Wolf* (1554)[58] Turner replaced the corrupt system that he had described with a presbyterian system that made annual congregational elections of elders, superintendents and overseers.

John Bale[59] exploited similar anti-episcopal narrative to that of Turner, Joye, and Barnes in his reformist propaganda books. That John Bale was involved in the conscious production of Protestant propaganda and that he worked closely with other reformers, all of whom had a keen sense of the importance of distributing pro-reform books and pamphlets as well as the subtleties involved in the different forms of writing, is borne out in a letter sent by John Ponet from Strasbourg to Bale at Frankfurt, both of whom had sought exile at the beginning of Mary I's new Catholic regime.[60] 'I understand by your letters', remarked Ponet in his address to Bale,

> that ye be no lesse godly occupied then ye were wont to be, in whiche travayle no dout God will assist you. Ballets, rymes, and short toyes that be not deare, and will easily be born away doe muche good at home amonge the rude peple. To the whiche studies I mynd not to pluk yow, from your other more weightie purposes, but wishe that yow wold pryk other on to suche easy exercises, who either ~~will~~ can not or will not travayle in longe processes. The papists shew ther faces so shamelesly, and being destitute of all godly weapon presse so sore apon us, that it is an easy matter for any that hath ben a scholer in Gods spryte to wounde them where he ~~they~~ lust. Blynd fury hath made them witles, and if we ioyne strengths agaynst them, we shall make them hartles.[61]

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[57] On the evolution of the concept of the two churches see: John Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth-Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman*, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 8 ([n.p.]: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978), esp. cap 2.

[58] William Turner, *The Huntyng of the Romyshe Wolf* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1554).

[59] On John Bale as propagandist see Leslie P. Fairfield, *John Bale: mythmaker for the English Reformation* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976), which also traces the influence Bale had upon Foxe.

[60] BL Additional MS 29546, f.25.

[61] BL Additional MS 29546, f.25. See also E. J., 'John Ponet in Exile: a Ponet Letter to John Bale', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 37:3 (1986), 442-447, p.443.

Ponet was convinced of the efficacy of pamphlet propaganda - the kind of polemic, I argue, that employed anti-episcopal martyrological discourses - and he suggested that Bale should act as a director from Frankfurt organising the production of suitable pieces which could 'easily be born away' to England. 'The unlearned must not be ydell', said Ponet:

> Ther dayly exhortations shall incoradge the laborers, the plowmans whissell is no vayn instrument, the horse laboreth more cherfuly when he is chereshid. Let us all feyght in a throupe together, the learned with ther pen, the riche with ther substance, the poer with dispersinge those things that may edify.[62]

Here he reiterated his belief in the effectiveness of simple pamphlets to 'incoradge the laborers' and he also showed his conception of a loosely organised Protestant publishing house in his tripartite model of sponsors, writers and distributers where each fulfilled his role according to his means and talents.

Ponet's advice to Bale for the production of pro-Protestant pamphlets was to 'play the bushop amonge [his] companions ther, as thoughe [he] were amonge [his] flok in Yerland.' Indeed Bale had been at work on his anti-episcopal pieces *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishoprick of Ossorie in Irelande* (1553) and *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles* (1554),[63] as well as his martyrological *A Soveraigne Cordial For a Christian Conscience* (1554). He had probably also started work on his lengthy indictment of the Catholic papal genealogy, the *Acta Romanorum Pontificum,* published in Basel in 1558. Bale's role as a kind of editor in chief (in all but name) is also suggested by the fact that Ponet sent a copy of his *Short treatise of politike power* (1556)[64] ('[m]y furst book is ready and loe I send you one') with this

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62 BL Additional MS 29546, f.25.

63 *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles, concerning the cleargye of London dyocese whereby that execrable Antychriste, is in his righte colours reueled in the yeare of our Lord a. 1554. By John Bale. Newlye set fourth & allowed* (London: Jhon. Tysdall for Frauncys Coldocke, 1561).

64 ([n.p.: n.pub, 1556]).

letter, remarking that '[p]ractyse hath taught [Bale] what falts shoulde be shoned' for the writing of Protestant propaganda, and that he would like to make emendations based on Bale's comments. So both Ponet and Bale were actively engaged in the production of numerous books attacking the reinstatement of the Catholic church in England under Mary I and Bale was conceived of as an experienced propagandist who should direct the production of all kinds of Protestant pieces from Frankfurt.

Earlier than this period of exile, during the Henrician reaction against reform, John Bale wrote two accounts of the indictements and trials of Anne Askew by the conservative Henrician bishops: *The first examinacyon*, ed. by John Bale (1546), and *The lattre examinacyon*, ed. by John Bale (1547).[65] Anne Askew (1521-46) was a well-educated and pious daughter of Sir William Askew, a Lincolnshire gentleman. In 1546, she was arrested, tortured and accused of heresy for her views on the sacrament, and her suffering at Smithfield on 16 July of the same year has been identified as part of the campaign by court conservatives, including bishops John Bonner and Stephen Gardiner, to discredit the views of the Protestant queen Catharine Parr.[66] In *John Bale: mythmaker for the English Reformation,* Leslie Fairfield believes that there were around 3,500 copies of Askew's *Examinations* in circulation during Edward VI's reign,[67] which makes the *Examinations* an important piece of propaganda. Bale's two books incorporated Askew's memorial reconstruction

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[65] These were published separately at Wesel. After these, in England there were four further editions of Askew's *Examinations* published during the reign of Edward VI, one of which included Bale's additional commentary. They were also reproduced (sans Bale) in Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes*. On the composition of the *Examinations* by Askew see Elaine V. Beilin, 'Anne Askew's Self-Portrait in the *Examinations*', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp.77-91.

[66] See A. G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959; repr. 1966), p.34.

[67] Fairfield, *John Bale*, p.135.

of her examinations and framed them within a narrative by Bale, which took the opportunity to support Askew's opinion on the nature of the sacrament. What has not previously been noticed is that these books followed a pattern established by the offensive against the episcopal activities of visitation and examination, as I have shown here developing in Joye, Barnes and Turner. Both Askew in writing them, and Bale in editing them, showed an awareness of this. In '"Except that they had offended the Lawe": Gender and Jurisprudence in *The Examinations of Anne Askew*',[68] Paula McQuade has recently presented a lucid and convincing argument that Bale's rendering of Askew as a martyr obscures the importance of her responses in her examinations as attempts to oppose the *ex officio* powers of the ecclesiastical courts with the Common Law. McQuade argues that, because Bale's main purpose in his *Examinations* was to present Askew as a Protestant martyr, he elided her apparent intricate knowledge of the law by which she attempted to obtain a proper trial by the common law. Askew's responses in her examinations, argues McQuade, appealed to the Heresy Statute (passed in 1534, revoked in 1539 and reinstated in 1544) which had curtailed the *ex officio* powers of the ecclesiastical courts.[69] McQuade's argument liberates Askew from Bale's editorial purpose of displaying Askew as a martyr of the Protestant church, and it also shows that modern critics have fallen in with Bale's use of her trials in the way that they concentrate on notions of her martyrdom as an end in itself. I concur with this observation. For example, in *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694*,[70] John Knott identifies the narrative of the

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68 In *Literature and History* 3:2 (Autumn 1994), 1-14.

69 The attempts by Parliament to curtail the powers of Convocation and the ecclesiastical courts are as central to Reformation politics as the propaganda of reformers against bishops. On the jurisdictional boundaries of the Common, Civil and Ecclesiastical Law and the relevance of this to Reformation politics see R. H. Helmholz, *Roman Canon Law in Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

examinations as important because they show the 'agon' of persecuted Protestants. But Knott's narrative is exclusively concerned with the making of 'religious martyrs' literature, and does not suggest the application of such discourses to curtailing ecclesiastical jurisdiction, as does the composition of the *Examinations* by Askew. This thesis concurs with McQuade's argument about Askew's jurisprudence by showing how such discourses were used to forge anti-episcopal propaganda, but I give greater credit to Bale in the *First Examinacyon* and the *Latter Examinacyon* for his implementation of martyrological discourses as a means to this end. Just as McQuade argues that the important point of Askew's examinations was the way she opposed ecclesiastical jurisdiction, I argue that martyrological discourses were forged by Bale for this specific purpose too. And what I add is that this was just one discourse amongst many that were part of anti-episcopal writing. Bale gave his version of the significance of Askew's examination as follows:

> as touchynge Anne Askewe, these ii examynacyons, with her other known handelyges in England, are wytnesses for her suffycyent. Thus hath not the fyre taken Anne Askewe all whole from the worlde, but left her here into it more pure.[71]

Because Bale supplied a detailed account of the 'handelynge' of Askew by the bishops, including her being thrown into prison without trial, gruesomely tortured and forbidden visitors,[72] he made a direct attack on the episcopal system of justice; and because he likened the suffering of Askew to that of Blandina, a martyr of the primitive church as recorded by Eusebius, Bale completed the teleological purpose of the martyrological discourses. As with Joye and Barnes, scriptural typology was used by Bale when he equated the solitary confinement of Askew with the period which Christ spent in the

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70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.9.

71 Anne Askew, *The first examinacyon*, ed. by John Bale (Marburg: [n.pub.], 1546) and *The lattre examinacyon*, ed. by John Bale (Marburg: [n.pub.], 1547) [bound together], sig.A.ix.^{v}.

72 Bale (ed.), *Examinacyons*, sig.A.ii.^{r}.

wilderness.[73] But, as with the former writers, the effect of this when combined with his other material on her 'handelynges' by the bishops was to direct martyrological discourses against episcopal practices and, through the fate of his heroine, towards the scriptures.

In 'Anne Askew's Self-Portrait in the *Examinations*',[74] Elaine V. Beilin claims that, in composing the record of her examinations, Askew showed a singular strength of character and mind which bespoke her other actions, such as her separation from and filing for divorce against her husband, in a strongly patriarchal social and political context. In support of her argument Beilin remarks:

> In considering Askew's motives for writing down her two examinations, we may remember first how unusual such a step was. Many of the accused Reformers wrote letters, but these were almost entirely to clarify or declare points of doctrine for other Reformers. No other contemporary autobiographical document remains that describes in such detail the questioning and suffering of a heresy trial, or gives so vivid a sense of the victim's personality.[75]

But the evidence that I have shown so far reveals that in fact memorial reconstruction of examinations for the purposes of printing was not such a singular act, and there are many remaining examples of books that presented detailed accounts of examinations. My point is that, indeed, letters written by reformers from prison were not just meant to clarify points of doctrine to a limited private audience (Beilin only refers to the letters of John Lascelles in support of this claim), but were part of a concerted effort to martyr their authors and expose episcopal jurisdiction as persecutory and corrupt. In my opinion, Askew's self-portraits, and Bale's interest in editing them (as he had edited the MSS that recorded the episcopal examination of Lord Cobham), formed a

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[73] Bale (ed.), *Examinacyons*, sig.A.ii.[r].

[74] Elaine V. Beilin, 'Anne Askew's Self-Portrait in the *Examinations*', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp.77-91.

[75] Beilin, 'Anne Askew's Self-Portrait in the *Examinations*', p.83.

critique of episcopal examination because they were in a clearly identifiable tradition of anti-episcopal writing.

Furthermore, Bale continued to direct such martyrological texts against the episcopal hierarchy in *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles,*[76] which was first published around 1554. This book was a direct affront to the veracity of episcopal jurisdiction since it reproduced the articles of enquiry that Edmund Bonner sent forth as Bishop of London at the commencement of Mary I's reversal of the protestantisation of the English church that had occurred during the previous reign. Since, in his introductory remarks to the episcopal articles, Bale changes the spelling of the word 'bishop' to 'biteshepe', it is quite clear that his reproduction of these articles is not in support of their propagation. His homophone suggests that the articles in question were created with the singular intention of mutilating the souls in Bonner's cure. Here, the phonetic proximity of 'biteshepe' to 'bishop' reveals Bale's talent as a propagandist, in this particular instance because he is able to render the English episcopate not as self-sacrificing shepherds tending to the safety of their flock but as careerist hypocrites intent on devouring those in their care/cure for the sake of temporal gain.

In *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles* Bale presented each of Bonner's articles, which were to have been followed as ecclesiastical law throughout his diocese and beyond, was transcribed in order to present a commentary upon them. This gloss was to seriously question the efficacy of their doctrinal foundations as well as the injustice that their implementation

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[76] The full title of this work is *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles, concerning the cleargye of London dyocese whereby that execrable Antychriste, is in his righte colours reueled in the yeare of our Lord a. 1554. By John Bale. Newlye set fourth & allowed* (London: Jhon. Tysdall for Frauncys Coldocke, 1561). As this title indicates that it is a new edition, one must assume that there was an earlier edtion in 1554. I have not been able to find an extant copy of this earlier edition.

would cause to prevail. Within such commentaries Bale afforded ample space to a direct attack upon the episcopal bench that had been appointed by Mary I, indicating a culpability in its willingness to implement her policy of reinstating Catholic doctrine and practices within the English church, and placing it once again under the control of the Pope in Rome. 'But they only are there vnto admytted', said Bale of Bonner's clergy,

> whyche haue bene smered wyth the popes styncking shoe grease + lamp oyle, hauing a mark in their right hands and fore heardes, wyth authoritye, there to bye + to sell.[77]

It is the episcopal hierarchy and the control of the English church by such episcopal articles as these put forward by the bishop of London, asserted Bale, that are responsible for such corrupt practices as elaborate episcopal ordination ceremonies and the granting by the church of concessions to parishioners for monetary compensation. In this book Bale held both episcopacy and episcopate responsible for the problems with the English church: he examined and criticised the contemporary episcopate, attacking the activities of the henchman of 'Bloody' Mary's purgation of Protestant influence from the English church (Bonner) and exposing and intervening directly in the machinery of his episcopal office; and at the same time he surveyed and reprehended unreformed episcopacy by exposing the doctrinal beliefs and institutional practices of its members. Martyrology was important in this book - not for its own sake or for the notion of 'agon' the style created, but because it was a powerful discursive practice that exposed and critically dissected episcopal practices.

The publications surrounding the indictment and examinations of John Philpot, Archdeacon of Winchester, in 1554-5 followed in the tradition of anti-episcopal forms of writing.[78] According to Robert Eden in the Parker

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77 Bale, *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles*, sigs. B.iiii.[r-v].

Society edition of *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot*,[79] Philpot was converted to Protestantism while on his travels in Rome and upon returning to England he entered orders. Prior to this, he had been educated at Wickham School, Winchester and trained in the civil law at Oxford. The time of Philpot's conversion is impossible to determine, but he was known for his Protestant sympathies from a series of lectures he gave on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans and the Galatians at Winchester in the last years of the reign of Henry VIII. During the reign of Edward VI the campaign against the conservative episcopate had slackened because Protestant leaders replaced some of the conservative bishops in their Sees, and reformers received a greater degree of patronage compared to the reaction against them during the latter years of Henry VIII's reign. But, on the accession of Mary I in 1553, who was determined to reinstate pre-Henrician Roman Catholicism in England, Protestants were once again forced into exile or into defending their position against Mary's Catholic episcopate. In 1554 a Convocation was called to establish and ratify points of doctrine and order for the Marian church. Convocation was the representative assembly of the clergy, composed of bishops in an Upper House and lesser clergy in a Lower House. Convocation had originally been assembled, from the thirteenth century to grant clerical taxation to the Crown, but, by the sixteenth century, it had come to deliberate on and make laws for the church - an increase in authority and control common

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[78] John Philpot, *The trew report of the dysputacyon had – begone in the conuocacyon hows at london among the clargye there assembled the xviij. daye of October in theyeare of our lord M.D.LJJJJ* (Basel: Alexander Edmonds, [1554]), and *The examinacion of the constaunt Martir of Christ, John Philpot Archediacon of Winchestre at sondry seasons n the tyme of his sore emprisonment, conuented and bayted, as in these particular tragedies folowyng, it maye (not only to the christen nstruction, but also to the mery recracion of the indifferent reader) most manifestly appeare.* (Basel: Alexander Edmonds, [1554]).

[79] Rev. Robert Eden (ed.), *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot*, The Parker Society Works of the Fathers and Early Writers of the Reformed English Church Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1842), p.iv.

to both this episcopal institution and the process of visitation. Such aggrandisement of the role of the bishop within the community was one of the main beefs anti-episcopal writing had against the contemporary episcopate. Regarding it as a corruption of a bishop's legitimate function, anti-episcopal martyrological propagandists sought to reform this augmentation in the province of episcopal jurisdiction. Mary's Convocation of 1554 was acting in this legislative capacity. It is clear from two main Bills of this meeting of Convocation - packed as it was with the new Catholic bishops and other placemen appointed by Mary - that it was designed to officially reinstate Roman Catholicism in England. One of the bills demanded that Convocation should accept the real presence of Christ in the sacrament (the Catholic belief in transubstantiation) and the other, in an attempt to reinstate further Catholic liturgy, proposed the outlawing of the Edwardian *Book of Common Prayer* because it had not been ratified by Convocation. John Philpot took up the gauntlet - the stumping of a Protestant church in England - in his steadfast defence of the Protestant interpretation of the sacrament during the sessions of this Convocation, and in his subsequent publication of *The trew report of the dysputacyon had + begone in the conuocacyon hows at london among the clargye there assembled the xviij. daye of October in theyeare of our lord M.D.LJJJJ.* In December 1553 Mary had already relinquished her title as 'Supreme Head of the English Church'. Since, following this lead, the 1554 meeting of Convocation was reactionary and sought to validate the reinstatement of a pre-reformation liturgy and church hierarchy, Philpot's points of attack were very similar to those of the early reformers. However, *The trew report* represented an important evolutionary stage in anti-episcopal

propaganda because it exposed the practices of the episcopal legislative body. In his vehement opposition to the Marian Convocation, Philpot made an attack on the entire legislative body of late-medieval Catholic episcopacy.

The bishop-reformer and Marian martyr, Hugh Latimer, had already targeted Convocation as an episcopal institution in need of radical reform in his sermon *Ad Clerum,* which he delivered to the Convocation of 1537. This Latin sermon was printed in the same year in Basel and later Englished and published as part of a collection of Latimer's sermons by Augustine Bernhers.[80] In this sermon Latimer's observations about the prelates of the Convocation (the bishops and higher clergy) epitomised the arguments against the form of Tudor episcopacy found in the anti-episcopal martyrologies at which we have been looking. On sig.A.vii.^{v}, Latimer specifically explained that his comments were directed towards Bishops, Abbots, Priors and Archdeacons. He included a wide-ranging assault on the many corruptions of the English Church that had become apparent during the reformation. Among these he tackled the sacraments, images, Purgatory, simony, and preaching. But what is noticeable throughout is the way in which the responsibility to effect reform was laid with the bishops, as custodians of the English church: and he found them to be seriously negligent in their duties, shirking their true, pastoral responsibilities. Latimer used scriptural exegesis to form his critique of the church episcopate as it stood in 1537. In this sermon to the House of Convocation, Latimer's eloquence laid down much of the scriptural typological material with which the anti-episcopal propagandists worked. He told the story of the unfaithful steward (Luke 16:1-8) who, when he was called before his lord to account for his work,

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80 Latimer's sermon to the Convocation was first printed alone as: Hugh Latimer, *H. Latimeri ... oratio, apud totum Ecclesiasticoru coventum, ... de Regni statu per Evangelium reformando, etc.* (R. Winter: Basile, 1537) and later appears Englished in Augustine Bernhers (ed.), *27 Sermons* (London: John Day, 1562 and 1571).

was dismissed from his office as a dissipator and waster; and he referred to a passage from Luke 16:8, saying: 'The children of this world [are] muche more prudent and politicke, than the chyldren of lyght in theyr generacion'.[81] He found the bishops to be worldly children of darkness and corrupt stewards rather than faithful dispensers of God's mysteries.[82] In the seven years it had been in office, said Latimer, Convocation had done very little to promote the faithful children of light against the worldly, politic children of darkness.[83] Latimer's sermon attacked the bishops for being careerists, self-interested parties, not concerned with the preaching of God's mysteries and intent only on accruing temporal wealth and power. And it was the episcopal judiciary that Latimer specifically identified as the corrupt means to this end. 'What is done in the arches? ...', he said, 'Do they evermore correct vice, or els defend it?';[84] and asking rhetorically of the business of the main episcopal court, he said '... what do men in Bishops Consistories? Shall you after see the punishments assigned by the lawes executed, or els money redemptions used in their stede?'.[85] So Latimer, like so many of the other reformers, referred to the corruptions of the episcopal judicial machinery where spiritual jurisdiction was used, not as a faithful steward should operate it - as an apparatus for the correction of error -, but as a means to extort revenue by those children of darkness concerned only for temporal gain. Since Latimer's sermon *Apud totum Ecclesiasticorum coventum* was not Englished until 1562 it does not qualify as a part of the anti-episcopal propaganda of the period I discuss, but it is representative of the form that such

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81 Latimer, *27 Sermons*, sig.A.ii.[r]. '... for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light', Luke 16:8, *King James Version.*

82 Latimer, *27 Sermons*, sig.A.iv.[r].

83 Latimer, *27 Sermons*, sigs. A.vii.[r-v].

84 Latimer, *27 Sermons*, sig B.i.[v]. The Court of the Arches, located in the church of St Mary le Bow, London, was the appeal court for the arciepiscopal Province of Canterbury.

85 Latimer, *27 Sermons*, sig. B.i.[v].

writing took. It is quite clear that Latimer's sermon was as clear as Tyndale, Joye, Barnes, Turner, Bale, Philpot and others in identifying English Tudor episcopacy - incorporating, as it did, such significant temporal wealth and jurisdiction - as an office in need of radical reform if the English church was ever to become a Protestant one. Convocation, the formal 'House' from which the English Tudor episcopate legislated, was the natural target of such criticisms.

The propaganda of Philpot also directly tackled this institution as the root of the problem for creating a genuinely reformed English church. For Philpot too, lack of reform in the episcopal office was regarded as the main obstacle preventing reform of the church in general. In *The trew report* Philpot explained how he opposed subscription to the bills on transubstantiation and the *Book of Common Prayer* along with five others of the lesser clergy (the Deans of Rochester and Exeter, the Archdeacons of Hertford and Stow and, says Philpot one other). Philpot noted that he had further proposed that matters of doctrine should be discussed with the members of Edward VI's special commission that had met to decide on these issues - including Nicholas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer and Hugh Latimer. This was the commission authorised by the 'Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum' (3 & 4 Edward VI, c.11) in 1549. Its job was to replace the medieval canon law, inherently based on Roman Catholic doctrine, with a new system of discipline and order for the separated English Church. But, Philpot wrote, Hugh Weston, the Prolocutor of the Convocation, denied this appeal by Philpot on the grounds that the people he wished to be called to the dispute were currently prisoners. So, characteristically of Protestant records of episcopal examination, the debate on transubstantiation

in *The trew report* ensued with Philpot alone defending his position against a body of persecuting bishops. Ultimately Philpot and five others refused to subscribe to the doctrine of transubstantiation and the book concluded with Hugh Weston reprimanding Philpot by saying that if he wished to attend Convocation again he must wear the correct apparel.

The editor of *The trew report* explained exactly why he had reproduced the events of the 1554 Convocation:

> they whos subscripcyon was requyred in the conuocacyon holden at powlys at the last parlament, iudged not amysse that thoght it necessary to reason and dispute therein [about the issue of transubstantiation] before they wold subscrybe to any conclusyon or determynate sentence. And to the intent that all men may knowe and see what reasons and answers were made on both partys I haue thought good to publyssh so moch thereoff as came to my handis, trusting that no man wyll be more offended wyth the settyng furth thereoff, to the intent that such as were not present may reade such thingys as there were done and sayd no more than they were that all that were present shuld heare them and iudge indifferently by the toch stone of gods word on whych part the truth doth remayne.[86]

The editor here agreed that Philpot and others were correct in requesting that the matter of transubstantiation should be debated and claims that his sole purpose in printing the report was so that others, who had not been present at the Convocation, could judge the material against the scripture for themselves. Although such a reason for publication may appear reasonable, Philpot's defence of Protestant doctrine in this Convocation and his publication of *The trew report* resulted in his imprisonment and later trial for heretical belief. But *The trew report* did more than simply offer Philpot's controversy in Convocation for public scrutiny, and this fact helps to explain why its publication lead to his indictment. Philpot cast himself as a tyrannised victim by shaping the main narrative of his 'true report' around his altercation with the panel of Marian bishops. By fashioning, in the figure of Philpot, a demeanour of oppression by a self-interested hierarchy and the solitary helplessness of such a position, *The*

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86 Philpot, *The trew report*, sigs.A.iii.[r-v].

trew report functioned on an anagogical level. Philpot's posture made implicit reference to Jesus' defence of his ministry against the opposition of the Sanhedrin, chief priests, elders and scribes in the New Testament.[87] By using such scriptural typology, the bishops who opposed Philpot in the Convocation of 1554, were equated with those institutions that were responsible - motivated by careerism and political expediency - for the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Christ and the dismantling of his ministry. In this way, *The trew report* foreshadowed the time when Philpot would be defending his own life against charges of sedition and heresy, the events of which Philpot once again recorded and published, using similar scriptural typology, in *The examinacion of the constaunt Martir of Christ, John Philpot* (1556).

Just as Joye and Barnes published the events of their examinations, just as Turner published his book on the evils of episcopal surveillance, just as Anne Askew carefully noted the procedure of her examinations and just as John Bale exposed Bonner's use of corrupt visitation practices,[88] here Philpot and the editor of the MS wanted to show the operation of bishops in Convocation and - with the help of scriptural typology - the significance of this for religious practice.

Similarly a text compiled largely by Nicholas Ridley, and subsequently gathered together and published posthumously, presented episcopal jurisdiction as a major part of the machinery used for the persecution of the Protestant church. In 1556, shortly after their executions in 1555 the shaping of Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer into Protestant martyrs began with the

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87 For a more detailed investigation of these anagogical references see my discussion of Philpot's *Examinacion* in the 'Introduction' above.

88 In John Bale, *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles, concerning the cleargye of London dyocese whereby that execrable Antychriste, is in his righte colours reueled in the yeare of our Lord a. 1554. By John Bale. Newlye set fourth & allowed* (London: Jhon Tysdall for Frauncys Coldocke, 1561). See above.

publication of *Certain Godly, Learned, and Comfortable Conferences*[89]. As the full title suggests, this text contributed to the Protestant anti-examination discourse by presenting 'Godly' and 'comfortable' (reassuring) conversations between these two Protestant bishops, while imprisoned in seperate cells in the Tower, caught up in the events of the Marian reversal in religious policy. It was during his imprisonment in Oxford that Ridley was able to compile and arrange for the sending of various MSS, concerning his and his colleagues' imprisonment and trials, to the continent for printing. In discussing the plight of Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer while being held in Oxford, David Loades remarks how it was mainly Ridley who undertook the task of producing and distributing written defences of the Protestant bishops' position:

> Not only did the Bishops write letters of general encouragement and exhortation to those in trouble 'for the gospel', they were also asked for, and gave, specific advice on answering the standard questions of their adversaries. They read and commented upon doctrinal treatises which were submitted for their approval, and arranged for particularly valuable works to be circulated. In all this activity Ridley was the leader.[90]

Both George Shipside, Ridley's brother-in-law, and Augustine Bernher, a disciple of Latimer,[91] had access to Ridley in Oxford and it was probably either or both of these figures who smuggled the MSS of *Certain Conferences* to Germany for printing.[92] In one letter to Ridley, written in early 1555 when the executions of Protestants had begun, Bernher expressed the urgent need to

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89 *Certen godly, learned, and comfortable conferences betwene the two Reverende fathers and holye Martyrs of Christe, D. Nicolas Rydley, Late Byshoppe of London, and M. Hughe Latymer, Sometyme Bysshoppe of Worcester, during the tyme of theyr emprysonmentes* ([Zurich?: n.pub.], 1556). There are two extant separate editions from 1556 - the second edition had appended a treatise on the Lord's Supper - which shows that this text was considered lucrative enough for publication by at least two printers.

90 David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992), p.172.

91 Bernher later edited and had published Latimer's sermons. See *Sermons of Latimer* (London: John Day, 1562).

92 On the roles of Shipside and Bernher as contacts between these leading Protestant prisoners and the larger Protestant community in England abroad see David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.171 and pp.176-7.

secure Ridley's MSS so that he could collect them and see them through the press:

> My Lord, I pray you as you have at all times (preserved) your books, so I trust you will do forward; and if so be that God shall take your lordship out of this misery, I would by all means possible get them in print beyond the seas, where I shall have the help of learned men.[93]

There is not doubt then, that the MS exchanges between Latimer and Ridley while in prison were always destined for the desk of sympathetic editors, the printer's workshop and, finally, publication. Ridley exploited martyrological discourses in this text to condemn his, and Latimer's and Cranmer's, episcopal examiners and detainers.

Certain Conferences portrayed two Protestant divines - who displayed an intimate knowledge of scripture and a keen sense of their impending execution - mewed in prison and awaiting trial as victims of persecution. On occasion, it appears, Ridley was in need of encouragement and advice to face his adversaries, and so he applied to Latimer for help. 'Sir', wrote Ridley to his fellow prisoner in the Tower,

> now I look daily when Diotrephes[94] with his warriors shall assault me; wherefore I pray you, good father, for that your are an old soldier and an expert warrior, and, God knoweth, I am but a young soldier, and as yet of small experience in these feats, help me, I pray you, to buckle my harness.[95]

Implicitly likening his position to that of Christ on the eve of his arrest by Temple police, Ridley asks for advice from his elder and more experienced companion. Characteristically, Latimer counsels Ridley to do just what Christ

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[93] *The Works of Bishop Ridley*, ed. by H. Christmas, Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1851), p.381.

[94] The editor of *The Works of Nicholas Ridley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843) assigns this as a reference to the conservative bishop Gardiner. Diotrephes represents the figure of a cruel persecuting bishop, and also appears later in *The State of the Church of England, Laide Open in a Conference betweene Diotrephes a Byshop, Tertullus a Papist, Demetrius an Usurer, Pandocheus an Inne-keeper, and Piale a Preacher of the Worde of God* (London: J. Waldegrave, 1588). Leland H. Carlson, *Martin Marprelate, Gentleman. Master Job Throckmorton Laid Open in His Colors* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1981) attributes *The State of the Church of England* to Job Throckmorton.

[95] Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, in *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, ed. by Henry Christmas, Parker Society (Lewes: Focus Christian Ministries Trust, 1988), p.117.

had done in the Garden of Gethsemane[96] in the moments when his courage was failing him. 'You shall prevail more with praying', responds Latimer,

> than with studying, though mixture be best; for so one shall alleviate the tediousness of the other. I intend not to contend much with them in words, after a reasonable account of my faith given; for it shall be but in vain. They will say as their father said, when they have no more to say, 'We have a law, and by our law he ought to die'. 'Be ye steadfast and unmoveale,' said St Paul. And again, *persistio*, 'Stand fast'... But we shall be called obstinate, sturdy, ignorant, heady, and what not. So that a man hath need of much patience, having to do with such men.[97]

Ridley's position, observed Latimer, was like that of Jesus as recounted in John 19:9-11, and from this he should not only take courage, but also find a model of conduct. The embedded scriptural pericopes in Ridley's petition to Latimer and in Latimer's reply reveal the way in which these two prisoners fashioned a martyrological posture for themselves. The effect of this posture was magnified when the steadfastness of Latimer and Ridley to Protestant piety was pitted against what was depicted as the illegalities of their persecutors. '[T]here is no remedy', says Latimer,

> ... (namely, now when they have the master-bowl in their hand, and rule the roast) but patience. Better it is to suffer what cruelty they will put unto us, than to incur god's high indignation...
>
> ... They can but kill the body, which otherwise is of itself mortal. Neither yet shall they do that when they list, but when God will suffer them, when the hour appointed is come. To use many words with them, it shall be but in vain, now that they [bishops Bonner and Gardiner] have a bloody and deadly law prepared for them.[98]

Latimer's words anagogically united the situation that he and Ridley found themselves in, with the final persecution of Christ, as recounted in the New Testament Gospel narratives. By recalling the New Testament teaching that the crucifixion of Christ was God's eschatological act of salvation, Latimer reassured Ridley that their adversity was not the punishment for heresy but a part of the process, as was the case with Jesus' plight, by which godly disclosure could be made. For the readers of this text then, the fact that these

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96 According to Matthew 26:36 and Mark 14:32.

97 Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit. p.119.

98 Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit. p.115.

two Protestants were burnt at the stake in the dry ditch outside Oxford did not mean that they were heretics. On the contrary, the use of martyrological discourses limned their execution as a theophanic vehicle whereby God's Will was fulfilled. While this implicitly drew readers towards the scriptures, by recalling the Christian kerygma, marginal annotations also directed readers to the exact passages of the Bible to which reference was made.

There are two main exchanges in Ridley's *Certain Conferences.* The first 'conference' was a written exchange between Latimer and Ridley in which they both made statements and commentaries upon the Protestant position concerning issues such as transubstantiation, relics, and the protocol of adoration. This ended with a brief statement by Latimer, denying the real presence in the sacrament, entitled 'Against the Sacrifice of the Mass'.[99] Because this first conference was conducted by the passing of MSS between the areas where Latimer and Ridley were confined, it accentuated the idea of their pilloried and fettered condition and tended to make the idea of their confinement more graphic. The second conference was based on fourteen 'Antonian Objections' - the questions of the examiners - to which Ridley and Latimer made answer. Discourses of martyrdom were created in the text of both conferences through scriptural typology, but their end was a criticism of the Marian episcopal hierarchy. The second conference also drew on fictional analogy to achieve this purpose. Ridley carefully explained why he had chosen the form of 'Antonian Objections' on which to construct the second conference:

> As touching this Antonian, whom I have here made mine adversary, lest peradventure any imagination might carry you amiss, and make you think otherwise than I meant, know you that I have alluded to one Antony, a most cruel bishop of the Arians, and a very violent persecutor of them that were catholic and of a right judgement. To whom Hunericus, a tyrant of the Vandals, knowing Antony's fierceness, committed his whole authority, that he should either turn the christians which believed well unto his false religion, or else to punish and torment

[99] Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit., pp.110-116.

> them at his pleasure. Which thing Antonius took in hand to do, and executed the same against a great number, but specially against two most godly bishops, and most constant in the doctrine which was according to godliness.[100]

So the questions posed in the objections - questions that sixteenth-century episcopal examiners frequently put to radical reformers - were directly associated with a persecutory bishop-figure, a violent and fierce bishop who was employed specifically to wrest Christians from their faith on pain of death. Since they were appointees of the monarch, contemporary bishops like Edmund Bonner and Stephen Gardiner were clearly referred to here.[101] The analogy in fact is even neater than this too, because the figure that Ridley chose as a metaphor for his own examiners, as he points out, especially persecuted 'two most godly bishops' who were 'most constant in the doctrine which was according to godliness'. Ridley not only defined the process of his and Latimer's examination as persecutory, but he also made reference to the specific historical coordinates of the 1550s in the doctrinal issues that were raised. Reference was also made to Bishop Gardiner as Diotrephes when Latimer declared 'I have forgotten all massing matters and the mass itself I utterly detest and abhor: and so I confessed openly before our Diotrephes and others' and when he put up a lively objection to the accusation of inciting separatism by not attending mass:

> Diotrephes now of late did ever harp upon Unity, Unity. "Yea, Sir," (quoth I), "but in verity, not in popery. Better is a diversity than an unity in popery." I had nothing again but scornful jeers, with commandment to the Tower.[102]

The reference to Gardiner here shows that this print-piece was as much an occasional political piece as it was a discussion of church doctrine in respect of communion. *Certain Conferences* was an anti-episcopal martyrological piece which intervened in the polictical conflict which arose when the Catholic Mary I

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100 Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit., p.147.

101 'Marcus Antonius' was also Gardiner's pen-name. See Loades, *Oxford Martyrs*, p.172 and p.184.

102 Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit., p.121.

came to the throne, after roughly twenty years of a separated English church had elapsed following Henry VIII's break from Rome and the Protestant Protectorate of Edward VI. Factional rivalry over Catholic or Protestant policy in Convocation and the Council was always present in this period but the accession of Mary led to an ascendant Catholic episcopate - chosen from among the conservative clergy - that displaced such Protestant bishops as Latimer and Ridley. The importance of this and other contemporary texts like it to Tudor constitutional issues is largely a historical question and has been raised elsewhere.[103] What I have been seeking to address in this section is the implementation of the discursive practice that I have identified as anti-episcopal martyrology, which was used to attack old-style conservative episcopacy. This discursive practice alone could present a significant reformist challenge to the condition of Tudor episcopal lordship.

Latimer's belief, as he gave it in the first conference, that there was 'no remedy' for his and Ridley's condition but 'to suffer... cruelty', and Ridley's 'Antonian' metaphor clearly invoked martyrological roles for these prisoners. Latimer's further definition of the two interlocutors as theophanic instruments came after they had been discussing the errors present in the ceremonies of the church in the 'Second Conference'. This exchange concentrated on the Catholic Mass - which was brought back into the English church under Mary - in which Latimer and Ridley refuted the efficacy of transubstantiation. The conclusion drawn from the conversation was that, because their examination of

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[103] See, for example, Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Tudor Prelates and Politics, 1536-1558* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953); Ralph Houlbrooke, R., 'The Protestant Episcopate, 1547-1603: The Pastoral Contribution', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. by F. Heal and R. O'Day (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp.78-98; and Barrett L. Beer, 'Episcopacy and Reform in Mid-Tudor England', *Albion*, 23:2 (Summer, 1991), 231-252. Beer revises the assessment of Smith for the number of conservative bishops in power under Edward VI. See also David Starkey et. al., *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987).

the Bible showed the belief in transubstantiation to be corrupt, neither Latimer or Ridley could consent to attend the Mass. This is one of the major points over which these two leading Protestant champions were indicted: the public refusal to attend the Catholic version of communion by these two prominent figures in the church was an effective demonstration against the return of Roman Catholic doctrine to the English Church. Thus the examiners of Latimer and Ridley accused them of inciting schism within the church and declared that they should attend the Catholic Mass or be responsible for instigating sedition and civil war:

> Forasmuch as I perceive you are so stiffly, I will not say obstinately, bent, and so wedded to your own opinion, that no gentle exhortations, no wholesome counsels, no other kind of means can call you home to a better mind; there remaineth that which in like cases was wont to be the only remedy against stiffnecked and stubborn persons; that is, you must be hampered by the laws, and compelled either to obey, whether ye will or no, or else to suffer that which a rebel to the laws ought to suffer. Do you not know, that whosoever refuseth to obey the laws of the realm, he bewrayeth himself to be an enemy to his country? Do you not know, that this is the readiest way to stir up sedition and civil war? It is better that you should bear your own sin, than that, through the example of your breach of the common laws, the common quiet should be disturbed. How can you say you will be the queen's true subject, whenas you do openly profess that you will not keep her laws?[104]

The charge against Latimer and Ridley was that their view on transubstantiation was sinful. The Antonian objection that they should bear their own sin suggested that Latimer and Ridley should attend the Catholic Mass because their non-attendance was a breach of the common law and disturbed the peace. One cannot help recalling here the way in which Tyndale, Barnes, Bale, Turner and Joye all argued that, contrary to the bishops' own assertions, it was not the reformers but the corrupt bishops themselves that caused sedition. Contemporary readers may well have recalled this argument too. Latimer and Ridley had already asserted that the procedure followed by the Catholic Mass could not be supported by scripture and therefore they could not attend it

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[104] Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit., pp.141-2.

according to their consciences, despite the consequences for the commonwealth:

> If it were any one trifling ceremony, or if it were some one thing of itself indifferent, although I would wish nothing should be done in the church which doth not edify the same, yet for the continuance of the common quietness I could be content to bear it. But forasmuch as things done in the mass tend openly to the overthrow of Christ's institution, I judge that by no means, either in word or deed, I ought to consent unto it.[105]

Because the procedures of the contemporary mass, said Ridley here, were Antichristian ('tend openly to the overthrow of Christ's institution') his non-attendance was not schism or heresy, but an attempt to maintain the true church against that of a false one. The schismatic/heretic in breach of the common law and disrupting the peace of the commonwealth became here a martyr for the following of the true church. By consequence bishops Gardiner and Bonner became deputies of a false church set on the persecution of those who had exposed them. I am not suggesting here that the case of the consciences of Latimer and Ridley was constructed *by them* in order solely to contribute to anti-episcopal martyrology. It is more than likely that in order to go to the stake both Latimer and Ridley had to possess the conviction that the Catholic Mass was a false ritual. This issue of their conscience against the State was, in principle, just like that of Sir Thomas More when he refused to accept the Supremacy of Henry VIII. Of course More's conscience prevented him from assenting to a Protestant State Church whereas the consciences of Latimer and Ridley prevented them from accepting the return of Catholic practices, but the principle and the willingness to die for their beliefs was the same in all three. My point is, however, that reformers - who were often also editors and/or publishers - manipulated and exploited the prison correspondence of martyrs by turning it into protestant anti-episcopal

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105 Ridley, *Certen Conferences*, op. cit., p.121.

propaganda. As long as it was understood and accepted that the New Testament teaching that Christ's denunciation, imprisonment, examination and suffering at the cross was a salvific mission, constant anagogical references in the exchanges between Ridley and Latimer and their episcopal examiner depicted the detainees as enthralled victims with a godly purpose. If, according to the Gospel narratives, the *real-politik* and self-interest of the Sanhedrin and high-priest faction was exploited as an instrument, through Christ, for theophany and redemption, the anagogically depicted examinations and burnings of figures such as Latimer and Ridley were a demonstration not of heresy but of membership of the true church.

Throughout *Certain Conferences* reference was made to the examination process through, for example, descriptions of the hardship of confinement, commandment to the tower, or the examiner's voice. The very title of *Certain Conferences* showed how the discursive practice that opposed examination was pitched against such images of authority in order to depict them as persecutory. The conferences were 'godly' (showed true piety), 'learned' (employed a reasoned approach to the interpretation of the Scripture) and 'comfortable' (reassuring as signs of the true faith) because they connoted indicted prisoners as martyrs as opposed to heretics and, therefore, defined the episcopal examiners as persecutors.

While according to figures in Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials*[106] there were some 282 burnings during the Marian persecution, the trials and executions of Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer were clearly intended by the Marian authorities to be a showpiece.[107] The disputation at Oxford appears to have

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[106] John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822), III, ii, pp.554-6.

[107] Although it was never realised, a similar mock-disputation, to be held at Cambridge, was being planned by Hugh Weston for John Philpot, John Hooper, John Bradford and others. See the 'Biographical Notice' in Reverend Robert Eden (ed.) *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot*, The Parker

been designed by the Catholic authorities to justify their own position and depict these prominent Protestant apologists as misguided heretics. But, as is so clearly demonstrated in David Loades' *The Oxford Martyrs*,[108] this attempted defamation of committed Protestants was to prove a failure from the very first burnings.[109] The executions of John Rogers, Laurence Saunders, John Hooper and Rowland Taylor in the early February of 1555 did not provoke either the last-minute recantations in the prisoners, nor the allegiance of the public to their policy, that the government had intended. In spite of this, says David Loades, '[t]he persecution went on, but the discipline of the church was damaged rather than improved by the continued *autos de fé*'.[110] 'Whatever theoretical reservations the Protestant leaders may have had about the identification of the elect', says Loades,

> in practice they were using their persecution at the hands of the Marian authorities as evidence that they constituted the true church. There was no halfway house. Either they were malefactors deservedly suffering the penalties of valid laws, or they were saints whose afflictions condemned the whole system which oppressed them. In the summer of 1555 there was a widespread willingness to believe the latter.[111]

My argument is that it was anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda that contributed significantly to the success of this Protestant campaign even in the face of the potently authoritative attempt at the reinstatement of Catholic piety and ecclesiology under Mary.

Laurence Saunders' *A trewe mirrour* (1556)[112] uses martyrological discourse to denounce the public debate at Oxford as a fraudulent attempt by

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Society Works of the Fathers and Early Writers of the Reformed English Church Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1842).

108 David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992).

109 Loades supplies most of his evidence for the state of public opinion about the persecution from a combination of assessments of the burnings in diplomatic correspondence, official letters and the Catholic apologist propaganda that had attempted to discredit the creation of a martyrological status for the Protestant victims.

110 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.157.

111 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.162.

112 *A trewe mirrour or Glase wherin we maye beholde the wofull state of thys our Realme of Englande, set forth in a Dialogue or communicacion betwene Eusebius and Theophilus* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1556). The British Library Catalogue attributes this to Laurence Saunders.

episcopal persecutors to malign members of the true church. Written by a fellow martyr and published - after the death of its author at the stake in February 1555 - in the same year as Ridley's *Certen Conferences*, *A trewe mirrour* took the form of a dialogue, and showed considerable dramatic content and development of character. Its interlocutors were Eusebius, who was disposed to tolerance and genuinely interested in ascertaining a full explanation of the differences between 'y^{e} new learning' and the 'olde',[113] and Theophilus (literally, 'lover/friend of God'), a committed protestant wary of, but fully resigned to, his position as a man marked for destruction by the authorities of the Marian regime. 'As for me', remarked Theophilus, 'ye know I am halfe suspected and more. And therefore I loke when I shalbe called forth coram nobis and so to y^{e} fyer, a cruell death I tell you'.[114] 'Wil ye beleue me brother Theophi', responds Eusebius,

> [a]s god helpe me I am none of those that desireth the hurt of my neybour, and I tel you truth, I like thys religion the worsse for there crueltie. For vndoutedly [i]f the matter were in my hande there shoulde non be put to death except he would obstinatly rebell by commocions, or otherwyse moleste a whole commen wealth, as for hys conscyence let hym discharge that betwene God and hym selfe, he should chose for me, for any trouble I would worke him, for me thinkes it standes not w^{t} Charitie.[115]

Old friends, Theophilus and Eusebius had met in the street by chance and this exchange occurred as they took a walk in the fields and discussed topical news such as the national level of religious altercation, the Spanish presence with the impending marriage of Mary I to Philip II of Spain, and the recent disputation between the religious prisoners Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer and the episcopal and secular authorities. By setting the discussion between his two interlocutors in this context - a discussion in a rural location just outside the town, with

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[113] Eusebius was interested in hearing Theophilus' theological beliefs for, he said, 'the satisfying of my of my conscyence and or quieting thesame, for as for me although I be not of y^{e} new learning, yet am I not so addicted to the olde, but that I would be glad to here and reason the matter, to thende I promyse you I mought helpe to bring loue amonges our selues' (*A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.vi.^{r}).

[114] [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.v.^{v}.

[115] [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.v.^{v}.

Theophilus experiencing an impending sense of his arrest by ecclesiastical authorities - Saunders was alluding to the New Testament passages that described the time Jesus spent in the garden of Gethsemane with his disciples on the eve of his arrest by Temple police there.[116] Through this christological sub-text Saunders not only cast Theophilus in a martyrological role but suggested that his utterances, like those of Christ before him, carried messianic import.

Saunders' text displayed considerable sensitivity to the political climate and social consequences of this. 'The pages of Foxe', observes David Loades in *The Oxford Martyrs*,

> are dotted with the stories of those who endured, and sometimes perished, in obscure prisons. There must have been many who yielded to such pressures, and left no record. Similarly, the eight hundred or so who fled the country were probably only a small fraction of those who left their homes to avoid the attentions of *malicious neighbours* and *unfriendly curates*. In 1556 an investigation was carried out in Essex, and although the returns are very incomplete they record the names of fifteen individuals known to have 'fled for religion' (my italics).[117]

I have already noted the way in which George Joye's opinions and Robert Barnes' sermon were carefully noted by observers and communicated to their bishops, who - in their capacity as circumscribers of the English church and reformation - subsequently confined and/or examined them. Theophilus' knowledge that he is 'halfe suspected' and Eusebius' reassurance that he is 'none of those that desireth the hurt of my neybour', reveals an intimate awareness in Saunders, when limning his characters, of the 'malicious neighbours' and 'unfriendly curates' mentioned by Loades, and the predicament that their actions could have caused for people like Theophilus. Later, provoked by a comment of his companion, Theophilus asked 'what are those lyes then ye heard of late, I praye you let vs heare them[?]'.[118] But Eusebius quickly cut

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[116] See Matt. 26:36-50, Mark 14:32-46 and John 18:1-12. The two Synoptics name the garden Gethsemane, whereas John simply refers to the location as a garden.

[117] Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.156.

[118] [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.vi.[r].

Theophilus short by responding in, one supposes, lowered tones with 'Nay soft I sayd not precysely they were lyes...'.[119] Despite their established trust of each other and their probable isolation (in the fields) from eavesdroppers, Eusebius was still acutely aware of the personal risk he was incurring by talking with the Protestant Theophilus, and how easily misrepresentation could lead to accusation and condemnation. The palpable threat of the episcopal surveillance in which Prior Ashwell (in George Joye's *Letters*) and the transcribers of Robert Barnes' Christmas Eve sermon (in his *Supplicatyon*) were employed, was emphasised in this dramatic exchange. The ever-alert and highly sensitive 'ears' of the conservative bishops that William Turner described in *The huntyng* (they had 'a payre of prik ears standiyng vp, one before and an other behynde')[120] were, presumably, as well-adapted, like the anatomy of the animal to which they belonged, to performing their task in isolated country locations as in the city.

The first topic of conversation between these old friends had been the recent notorious disputation, held at Oxford. It was here that Theophilus introduced his defence of the captives. His observations on the nature of Ridley's, Latimer's and Cranmer's confinement and the conditions in which they were forced to debate the religious issues in question, reveal the use of martyrological discourse as a proof of the prisoner's affiliation with the 'true church'. 'Nowe I pray you what indefferency is thys?', asked Theophilus rhetorically,

> a man wythout study, wythout bokes, without conference with other, and almost without hearing shal dispute for hys lyfe? And they so many clappyng, at one tyme agaynst one poore man, alas it was a grefe.[121]

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119 [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.vi.[r].

120 Quoted above in my discussion of Turner's *The huntyng*.

121 [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.A.iiii.[v].

This coupled the position of each of the prisoner-disputants at Oxford directly with that of Jesus once he had fallen into the hands of the high priests in Jerusalem. By anagogically enhancing the significance of Theophilus' words, the author established Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer each as martyrs of the true church. According to this christological referencing, these martyrs had been yoked and tyrannised by a malicious authority whose worldly self-interest and political expediency - like that of the high priests or the Sanhedrin who had fettered and precondemned Jesus - had lead to their predetermination to degrade, humiliate and destroy their quarry.

The prisoners, continued Theophilus, had not been told of the disputation until the last minute - resulting in the inability to be adequately prepared for it and:

> assone as the disputacion was appointed, [i]mmediatly were they separated and coulde not conferre nor talke together: theyr owne bokes that they had laboured, and there commun places that they had gathered, was all taken from them when they came firste to pryson, ... [A]nd there [in the debating chamber] must one of them alone aunswere some tymes. vi. speaking to him at one time, and euer would they crye vpon him to cutte short, for the tyme was spent. And when it came to master Rydleys torne, he had prouided hys supposition, thinkynge to haue reade it, but they woulde not suffere hym. And yet he alledged for himself the order of the scoles, and that al that litel time he had bestowed in deuising the same, wherein he mynded to haue declared the substaunce of his affection of hys fayth and beleue touching that matter then in question, but he coulde not be suffred in any wise, and sondry tymes in hys talke they woulde take hym at aduauntage, and when he woulde open hys meaninge hys tale could not be heard of the audience, but yet there were that noted hys woordes.[122]

Again, it is the embedded christological allusion running through Theophilus' account of the way in which the Protestant defendants at Oxford were treated that gives definition to their martyred demeanour. Suffering violent verbal abuse from a babble of examiners and a clamorous public audience, Ridley's 'disputation' was miniated by this passage as a clear replication of the disorderly, riotous, mock-trial by mob law of the doomed Jesus as told in the New Testament gospel narratives at the beginning of the Passion pericopes.

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122 [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sigs.A.iv.[r-v].

Each of the Synoptics' accounts describes chief priests (bishops) defending their temporal status and power by inciting the crowds[123] to denounce and silence Jesus' defence, just as here Ridley 'coulde not be suffered in any wise [to declare] the substaunce of ... hys fayth' because of the commotion around him made by the examiners and the public audience. When Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judaea, offered Jesus' life in exchange for that of Barrabas - described by all the Synoptics as a heinous criminal - he did it because 'he knew that for envy they [the chief priests] had delivered him [Jesus]' (Matt. 27:18). But Pilate's conscience, his unwillingness to take part in this paralysis of law, was not to be satisfied, except at the risk of a possibly serious civil disturbance. His repeated offers to release Jesus instead of Barrabas were met with 'Let him be crucified' (Matt. 27:22), 'tumult' (Matt. 27:24), 'the multitude crying aloud' (Mark 15:8), '[crying] out more exceedingly' (Mark 15:14), and the crowd being 'instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified' (Luke 23:23). Similarly, when Ridley 'woulde open hys meaninge hys tale could not be heard of the audience'. There is little doubt that Saunders encoded Theophilus' description of Ridley's ill-treatment at the Oxford disputation with an anagogic meta-narrative that led his readers directly to the Synoptics' chronicles of the lawless mock-hearing of Jesus at the court of Pilate. Through the creation of this scriptural sub-text, Saunders' writing etched a portrait of Ridley in a martyrological posture. Through this depiction of Ridley, he directed his readers to the compelling Biblical account of an envious, conspiring, self-interested group of chief priests (prelates or bishops) and the events that marked the eve of what was to be God's eschatological act of salvation for mankind.

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[123] See especially Mark 15:11 'But the chief priests moved the people, that he [Pilate] should rather release Barabbas unto them'.

That it was the bishops who were responsible for immuring and persecuting these three martyrs was also made clear through the character of Theophilus when he said:

> Why man ye must vnderstande that your catholykes nowe beare the rule, youre *prelates of the Churche* haue al the doynges of these matters, and ye knowe they hauinge none inheritaunce but for their liues, beyng without wife and children, rather then they would be brought down agayne, as they were in king Edwardes dayes they had rather the Turke had the rule and gouernement therof.[124] (my italics)

Through the mouthpiece of Theophilus, Saunders unequivocally stated that it was the bishops ('prelates of the Churche') who were responsible for the persecution of Protestants. Their motives stemmed from the desire to maintain their temporal wealth and power, because, as Saunders clearly explained, as crown appointees with non-hereditary tenure of their bishoprics, Tudor bishops had to legislate and execute the policy of the secular government. At this time Catholicism prevailed and, as instruments of the Crown in their regional dioceses, it was the bishops who were responsible for the detection and examination of heretical (Protestant) opinion.

But Saunders' anti-episcopacy did not rest with a condemnation of the way in which Tudor bishops persecuted Protestants for temporal reward. His censure of members of the religious hierarchy that was being established under Mary Tudor extended to incontinence and the lack of observance of abstinence as a meritorious pietistic practice, when his Protestant champion Theophilus said:

> I meane of such, as vse muche banketynge and costly fare dayly in theyr houses, with such superfluyte, as surely is in mine opinion to much, and none vse it more, then your *Prelates of the Churche*: for they suppose themselues to fast sufficiently, if they abstayne from fleshe frydayes and saterdayes, and suche lyke dayes as they haue appoynted.[125] (my italics)

Saunders identified Tudor bishops ('Prelates of the Churche') as overindulgent ('such superfluyte') and the worst offenders in the breach of the scriptural

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124 [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig.B.i.[r].

125 [Laurance Saunders], *A trewe mirrour*, sig. B.iiii.[r].

counsel in favour of fasting. He thereby also directed his readers to the Bible and certain tenets of the Protestant creed. And, presumably, such daily 'banketynge and costly fare' among the bishops was partly financed through the revenues they exacted from spiritualities, which included receipts gleaned from all the pietistic misdemeanours of their parishioners that they detected during the process of visitation and examination.

This theory of counter-examination represented the equivalent of - and a direct opposition to - the *detecta et comperta* and the Act books of the ecclesiastical courts that were overseen by the bishops. Advocates of episcopal reform created an ecclesiastical court - *detecta et comperta* - of their own by fashioning martyrological stances for all types of episcopal detainees. With these arguments they were able to oppose the episcopal institution at its heart, using and presenting detailed information of its normally closet and confidential procedures. Furthermore, such texts could and did present a detailed exegesis of scripture, glossing passages according to notions inherent in a reformed theology and polity for the church. It was through printing and distributing such discursive practices that anti-episcopal polemic challenged the veracity of the theology and ecclesiastical polity of a church which had not reformed the episcopal office.

Anti-visitational and anti-examination critiques of unreformed Tudor bishops also employed an anti-episcopal sumptuary code to effect their censures. While this aspect of Protestant polemic against conservative episcopacy was only minor in comparison to the other martyrological discourses I have discussed in detail, it is nevertheless notable for the similar way in which it subverted the notion of 'governors' imposing statute on the

'governed' by, as it were, reversing this process so that the 'ruled' legislated against the 'rulers'. Normally sumptuary laws were reactionary regulations used by the authorities to reinforce class divisions and curb the potential for upward social mobility in the lower orders. They stipulated dress codes and eating habits for people according to their social position and income, including restrictions on types of material and the colours of clothes that could be worn, the wearing of jewellery and the consumption of certain food.

In their reproval of the vestments worn by the contemporary episcopate described above, Robert Barnes and William Turner both questioned the propriety of Tudor bishops' clothing in relation to their status within the church and society. The anagogically engendered topographical disapprobation of the grandeur of the episcopal palaces in George Joye's description of the vast labyrinth he lost himself in at Westminster, and Robert Barnes' reference to the ostentation of the spaces in which he was examined, both noted in this Chapter, also rebuked the conspicuous consumption of the Tudor episcopate for being in excess of what was fit for their vocation. As I have just outlined, Laurence Saunders also directly struck at the eating habits of Tudor bishops. He reproached their immoderate consumption of food and their non-observance of fasting - which the Bible suggests is a necessary complement to prayer, penitence and the preparation for a new venture - as a flagrant breach of scriptural counsel. In his accidental stumble through the wrong door at Westminster, George Joye, too, obliquely planted in the imagination of his readers an image of the kitchens that served the Tudor bishops. All these examples show how anti-episcopal polemicists exploited the notion of sumptuary laws (just as they manipulated the idea of examination and

visitation) and, adhering to the regulations concerning dress and eating in the Bible, censured the excesses and corruptions of Tudor episcopacy.

English reform propagandists like George Joye, Robert Barnes, William Turner, Anne Askew, John Bale, John Philpot, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer all made contributions to anti-episcopal martyrology. They did this by making an institutional analysis of the contemporary episcopal office and presenting their findings - always measured against a scriptural precedent - to as large an audience as possible. In this Chapter I have shown how these writers gave accounts of the episcopal examination chamber - depicting it as a place, not of justice, but of persecution - and how they dissected the machinery of sixteenth-century episcopal jurisdiction, presenting it as a platform, not for pastoral care, but for treason and extortion of innocents.

Such writing involved the use of many elements including historical account, institutional analysis, memorial reconstruction, dialogue, specific forms of scripturalism and notions of Protestant martyrdom. These elements were carefully crafted, especially by the earlier writers such as Joye and Barnes, to produce a sophisticated and distinctive type of writing, which was at the same time effective as propaganda. Because the production of such pieces of writing coincided with those periods in the history of the Heresy Statute that increased *ex officio* episcopal jurisdiction,[126] their target can be specifically identified as the episcopal office. While historians have not previously identified the precision with which these texts assailed bishops, neither have literary critics analysed the anagogical function of their scripturalism to realise the way in which such writing condemned specific jurisdictional apparatuses of the

126 See the 'Introduction'.

episcopal institution. It is only when the latter has been realised that an analysis of the notion of Protestant martyrdom can be made.

Chapter IV: 'My Last Will and Testament'.

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'My Last Will and Testament'

On August 31 1554 the English Protestant James Haddon, Dean of Exeter, sent a pressing request from Strasbourg to the Swiss reformer Henry Bullinger. In his missive Haddon refered to a letter that one John Banks had sent to Bullinger a couple of months earlier, and said to Bullinger 'I beg of you by no means to make it public, or suffer many persons to copy it'. Haddon explains that he makes his entreaty because 'it will occasion the greatest danger to me, if it be published or appear in his [Banks'] name, because I brought him over from England, and he is with me as my friend'.[1] Two important things may be deduced from this: in England Banks was known as a reformer and associate of Haddon, and Banks had sent some dangerous material to Bullinger requesting that he publish it. What were the reformist activities of Banks and what were the mysterious MSS that he had sent to Bullinger?

John Banks' package to Henry Bullinger had been sent from London on March 15, 1554.[2] It contained four main MSS written by Lady Jane Grey, and others, while the former was in prison accused of heresy. Included in the package were her examination by John Feckenham (dean of St Paul's and chaplain/confessor to Mary I), two letters urging the continued pursuit of Protestantism to her sister Catherine and an old friend of the family, 'Master Harding',[3] and her dying words at the scaffold. Banks' covering letter gave an

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1 James Haddon to Henry Bullinger, Strasbourg, 31 August 1554, in Rev. Hastings Robinson (ed.), *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, Written During the Reigns of King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary: Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846-7), pp.294-5.

2 John Banks to Henry Bullinger, London, 15 March 1554, in Robinson (ed.), *Original Letters*, pp.303-305.

3 Robert Harding was chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, Lady Jane Grey's father, and was known to have urged people not to return to Catholicism when it was clear that Edward VI was dying. He did, however, swear allegiance to Mary I and Catholicism after her accession. Jane Grey's letter rebukes him

account of Jane Grey's 'admirable attainments in literature' by which 'she surpassed men in maintaining the cause of Christ', and explained that her suffering in prison and at execution should be seen as 'not so much a reason to mourn ... as to rejoice that the latest action of her life was terminated in bearing testimony to the name of Jesus'. Banks' commentary here is clearly formulated from the Protestant martyrological tradition - as explained in Chapter 1. The corporeal suffering of Jane Grey, both during her last days in prison and at her execution, was represented by Banks as a cipher or a site of illumination - an avatar - through which the reader of the collected MSS could be a party to the godly disclosure of soteriology ('the cause of Christ'), the saving significance of the Christ event, and the Christian kerygma ('bearing testimony to the name of Jesus'), proclaiming Jesus Christ as God's eschatological act of salvation. According to the martyrological framing argument used by Banks (already well-formulated through the compilation of earlier martyrological pieces), the Protestant martyrs' theopneustic utterances and writings were at a premium while they languished in episcopal jails or under episcopal examination, awaiting execution under charges of heresy. The theopneustia of Jane Grey, her divine inspirations, during her last days, suggested Banks, were embedded in her last known words, the last testaments she made, and his proposed text would anagogically recall for the reader the Gospel narratives of the suffering of Christ under persecution by the Sanhedrin and high priests, as well as more explicitly direct the reader to the scriptures through exegesis of crucial creedal pericopes and verse and chapter citation. This was all achieved through the fleshly affliction of his heroine. Banks also gave a brief account of Jane Grey's father, Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, whose Protestant learning also enabled

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for his blatant apostasy.

him to stand defiant 'when certain wicked wretches endeavoured to draw him away, while in prison, from the faith and confession of the true Christ'. Banks' purpose in sending these MSS of Jane Grey, and of the conduct of her and her father under examination by Marian 'papists', was, he explained, that they were 'truly deserving of being known by everyone' (i.e. that they be published by Bullinger).

In his letter to Bullinger, Haddon gave some important further reasons why he believed it would be imprudent to have Banks' package of prison MSS published at that time. 'I am rather afraid', said Haddon:

> that all the facts are not as described by him, but that he has gathered them from common report, and being himself too in some measure biased by his zeal. Were the statement published, it would probably do more harm to the truth, and to our cause, than it would do them good; to say nothing of the certain risk and peril which would hang over others. Nor could the whole account be defended with a sufficiently safe conscience, since, probably, some things have been stated as facts, which may not be found to be such. But as to what regards the lady Jane herself, and what is said in her name, (as for instance, her exhortations to a certain apostate, and her discourse with Feckenham,) I believe, and partly know, that it is true, and did really proceed from herself.[4]

Haddon's reasons for suppressing the publication of Banks' 'martyrology' of the Protestant heroine Jane Grey are revealing. He wanted to be sure that the various MSS accounts were authentic and not just 'gathered from common report', because he understood that if the authorities were to expose the contents of the resulting book as contrived, the Protestant martyrological discourse would be discredited, and could have no claims to represent the 'true' church. Although Haddon himself verified the good provenance of the examination by Feckenham and Jane Grey's letter to Harding ('a certain apostate'), he could not, he said, be certain as to the rest. In fact, in spite of Haddon's reservations, the martyrological propaganda project that Banks had suggested to Bullinger did appear in 1554 as *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane.*[5]

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4 James Haddon to Henry Bullinger, Robinson (ed.), *Original Letters*, pp.294-5

5 *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane a righte vertuous woman, To a learned man of late falne from the truth of gods most holy word, for fear of the worlde. Read it, to thy consolacion. Whereunto is added the*

In 1546 Jane Grey (1537-1554) had been placed in the household of the Protestant queen Catharine Parr, where she was given a humanist classical education. In 1553, when Edward VI's death seemed imminent, she was used as part of a plan to thwart the accession of the Catholic Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and his first wife Catharine of Aragon, to the throne. As part of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland's plot to disinherit Mary in favour of the Dudley family, Jane Grey was married to Sir Guildford Dudley in 1553, and in the same year, after the death of Edward VI, she was proclaimed queen but remained on the throne just 9 days.[6] Her father, Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, joined the rising, led by Wyatt in 1554, against the proposed marriage of Mary I to king Phillip II of Spain. Although affairs of dynasty and politics as well as religion were intricately woven into the fabric of these events of 1553-4, the activities of both Jane and Henry Grey generally supported a Protestant rather than a Catholic dynasty. For this reason, and because Jane had been educated as a Protestant humanist, both could be eulogised as Protestant martyrs by martyrological propagandists like Banks.

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communication that she had with master Feckenham vpon her faith, and belefe of the Sacraments. Also another Epistle whiche she wrote to her sister, with the words she spake vpon the Scaffold befor she suffered ([n.p.: n.pub], 1554). It was later incorporated into Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes* (1564), and republished in a new edition in 1615 entitled *The Life, Death, and Actions of the Most chast, learned, and Religious Lady, The Lady Iane Gray, Daughter to the Duke of Suffolke containing Fovre Principall Discourses, written with her owne hands* (London: G. Eld for Iohn Wright, 1615). The letter to her sister Catherine was also issued separately in 1554 as: *Here in this booke ye have a godly epistle made by a faithful Christian* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1554) and incorporated in Miles Coverdale's *Certain most godly, fruitful, and comfortable letters of such true Saintes and holy Martyrs of God, as in the late bloodye persecution here within this Realme, gaue their lyues for the defence of Christes holy gospel: written in the yme of theyr affliction and cruell imprysonment* (London: John Day, 1564).

[6] On a revision of the usual 'romantic' treatment of Lady Jane Grey, a legacy of Dekker and Webster's *The Famous History of Thomas Wyatt*, Burnet's *History of the Reformation* and the approach of Victorian literature see: Carole Levin, 'Lady Jane Grey: Protestant Queen and Martyr', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp.92-106. Levin's argument that Jane Grey was no mere pawn in the succession crisis but a highly learned woman who stuck to her own Protestant convictions and died for these, suggests that Banks' choice of Grey as a subject for an occasional piece of martyrological propaganda was an astute one.

Like John Bale in his *A brefe Chronycle concernynge [...] Oldcastle*[7], Banks wished to present MS sources that bespoke the persecution of Protestants (Jane and Henry Grey) by English bishops. As with the publication of the examinations of George Joye, Robert Barnes, Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, Anne Askew and John Philpot, detailed accounts of the conduct of imprisoned Protestants (imprisoned for their Protestantism), and their exchanges with their examiners, were recorded during the time of their ordeal and smuggled out, often to the continent, to be printed for a 'truly deserving' public. Banks' covering letter reveals that he was clearly conversant with the technique of framing such MSS with martyrological accounts that would prove the membership of the 'true' church by their authors. Haddon's letter reveals that the publication of such prison MSS, framed in this way, were also likely to occasion an uproar from the authorities. One of his prime concerns was the effect that charges of hearsay ('rumour') might have upon the credibility of martyrological books for the Protestant cause. '[W]e have', he said, 'too many matters of fact to make it necesary to collect mere rumours'. 'Our adversaries', he continued, 'already partly lay this calumniously to our charge: what will they do if they have sufficient grounds of accusation?'. Haddon did not wish the authorities to be given the slightest chance of discrediting the Protestant martyrological campaign. The letters of Haddon and Banks together certainly suggest that by 1554 occasional martyrological accounts were often printed by the reformers, that they were ruthlessly suppressed by the opponents of reform, and that the effect of such controversy on a reading public was an important consideration to reformers and opponents alike. I argue that it is

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[7] *A brefe Chronycle concernynge the Examinacyon and death of the blessed martyr of Christ syr Johan Oldecastell the lorde Cobham collected togyther by Johan Bale* ([Antwerp?]: [n.pub.], 1544)

important to recognise, therefore, that such activities by Banks, along with the concerns of Haddon, reveal that by 1553-4 a Protestant martyrological tradition, that used last wills and testaments as the basis of a Protestant insurgence denouncing a conservative episcopal administration, was well established. As I will show, the intervention of such texts that made use of such literary discursive practices had begun in the 1520s.

What is distinctive about Banks' intended book as anti-episcopal propaganda is its concentration on the dying wishes of its subjects and the testamentary records they left behind. The narrative of *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane*[8] focused on the fact that Jane Grey's 'life was terminated in bearing testimony', and her dying words at the scaffold were included for this reason. Her conference with Feckenham, which included a debate on the sacraments of the church and transubstantiation, was held a few days before her execution, and this was presented by the narrative of *An Epistle* as if the doctrinal statements she uttered there formed a part of her 'last will and testament'. John Feckenham - described by Banks as 'a clever and crafty papist' - was portrayed anagogically as a Satanic or high priestly influence, endeavouring to tempt Grey away from true belief; but, like the tempting of Christ by the devil in the wilderness and his various encounters with the Sanhedrin and high priests as recorded in the New Testament Gospels,[9] this ploy failed. In front of Feckenham and the assembled Tower officials who recorded the discussion, Grey maintained her solifidianism. She said:

> I deny that [good works are necessary for salvation], and I affirm that faith only saveth: but it is meet for a christian, in token that he followeth his master Christ, to do good works; yet may we not say that they profit to our salvation.[10]

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8 Anon, *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane* ([n.p.: n.pub., n.d.])

9 See my 'Introduction' above.

10 *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane*, sig.B.iii^{r}.

Jane Grey's words in the last few days of her life testified to her belief in the efficacy of justification by faith alone, as opposed to the importance that Catholic doctrine laid upon 'good works'. Banks set about circulating this Protestant notion of justification by faith by editing and publishing the last will and testament MSS of Grey, and validating Grey's panegyric upon this central aspect of the Protestant creed by anagogical allusion to the martyrological cast of his heroine. Grey's bodily death was the means by which this important feature of the Protestant faith could be made known.

There are indeed passages which may be construed as dying testaments in, for example, Anne Askew's *Examinations* and John Philpot's *Examinations,* but this is only because in general martyrological discourses worked, as I have explained, by showing that the death suffered by Protestants at the hands of bishops was a testament to the word of God, which included the martyrs' own statements and writing about scripture. But the accounts of Askew and Philpot, while - by consequence - they included such references to testament, concentrated predominantly on the examination process to effect their anti-episcopal propaganda: the last will and testament idiom was not foregrounded. The form of *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane*, however, is a late example of what can be called the martyrological discursive practice of last will and testament, because in it the fashioning of the martyr depended upon official testamentary obits or their unofficial equivalent of last-minute declarations.

From the inception of martyrological writing in the 1520s, the conduct and words of condemned Protestant captives was of crucial importance in fashioning the demeanour of a martyr and making a stand against episcopacy.

Conduct in prison and dying protestations were considered to be of crucial importance by Protestant propagandists because the punitive authority always sought to extract recantations or issue pardons becaue, should either of these take place, it would demonstrate the weakness and, therefore, heretical nature of the condemned prisoner's beliefs. Authors of last will and testament texts, therefore, moulded figures of resolute faith and great fortitude as a demonstration of the purity of their creed, and in order to undermine the episcopal judicial machinery that condemned them. I have already mentioned that, because of the method by which Jean Crespin, Ludwig Rabe, Heinrich Pantaleone, Johann Sleidane, Matthias Flaccius Illyricus and John Foxe compiled their histories in the 1550s, the distinct forms of anti-examination and last will and testament writing were subsumed under the broader-ranging biographical accounts of the martyrological figure. This Chapter recovers the last will and testament idiom in certain texts. They represent not only the evolution and shaping of these later larger narratives, but also important isolated examples of Tudor anti-episcopal insurgence that sought to subvert the ideology supporting conservative episcopal power.

So, the techniques to be found in the earlier distinct publications *were* replicated by these later Protestant historiographers. It is clear that within, for example, Foxe's larger accounts in his *Actes and Monumentes,* much of the narrative is given over to probing every aspect of the conduct of their subjects in the last days of their life as well as the circumstances surrounding their execution. The technique of collecting and editing material relevant to these last periods of confinement and execution had been developed by the earlier writers I have examined in this thesis.

In his discussion of the Marian government's attempted re-imposition of Catholicism in England, David Loades observes that the first burnings of the persecution immediately revealed a serious flaw in policy. From evidence presented by contemporary official sources and the writing of Catholic propagandists, Loades induces that '[o]nly a prevailing mood of devoted and intolerant orthodoxy could have brought success to the persecution of such a resolute minority'.[11] Since, says Loades, '[t]his did not exist',[12] Catholic apologists like John Christopherson and Miles Huggarde[13] became voices 'crying in the wilderness',[14] as 'reactions [to the persecution] were not at all what the government had hoped',[15] and even Mary I's Chancellor, Stephen Gardiner, himself 'quickly saw that things were going wrong'.[16] Loades concludes that the Marian policy of burning Protestants as heretics was still-born because the government was not, in fact, 'confuting a body of doctrine, but fighting a growing and insidious mythology'.[17]

While *The Oxford Martyrs* refers in footnotes to several passages from Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* and briefly notes the way in which prison diaries and accounts of the trials and executions of the 'resolute minority' were sometimes circulated after execution, the scope of Loades' study does not include a detailed analysis of how these various texts contributed to the growing Protestant mythology to which he alludes.[18] My emphasis here is

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11 David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.161.

12 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.161.

13 See John Christopherson, *An exhortation to alle menne to take hede and beware of rebellion* (London: [n.pub], 1554) and Miles Huggarde, *The displaying of the protestantes* (London: Robert Caly, 1556).

14 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.161.

15 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.156.

16 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, pp.156-7.

17 Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, p.160.

18 Loades offers several reasons for the adverse reaction of the public to the burnings, including the religious indifference of spectators and the link made by many between Catholicism - the persecutor - and the Spanish presence in England (see especially p.148 and pp.159-166).

slightly different to that of Loades' study. I suggest that the success of the Protestants' demonstrations was not so much a result of the failure of government policy but the success of a powerful martyrological display in prison, at the stake and in print. This also draws attention to the vinculum bonding literary culture to historical conditions, and recovers the social interaction in which the texts I treat here were involved. John Banks' earlier project for a publication about the trials and execution of Lady Jane Grey reveals that the notion and compilation of last will and testament literature was already well-developed among Protestant propagandists by 1554 and therefore suggests that it may have played a significant role in defeating Marian governmental religious policy.

So, like the other main forms of anti-episcopal writing, last will and testament accounts have an important history that pre-dates anti-Marian writing. This history of the construction of a distinctive textual stance and its contribution to anti-episcopal writing has been neglected, but it actually gives the Marian writing of this type, and indeed much of John Foxe's later material in the *Actes and Monumentes,* all its power.

Texts that exploit the idea of a last will and testament show a discursive practice akin to those that highlight and oppose the examination process. In both cases discourses of martyrdom are at work. In both cases the discursive practices are part of the radical Protestant polemic against episcopal hierarchy and policing during the reformation of the English church. However, there was a subtle difference in the way that each of these forms - examination and last will and testament - were put together and generated meaning. This Chapter will

show what devices the last will and testament pieces used and how they first functioned as anti-episcopal propaganda.

As with the other forms of martyrological writing, these texts were invested with poetic meaning through their anagogical allusion to New Testament narratives of the life of Jesus. The resonance of scriptural temptation pericopes in Banks' description of the role of John Feckenham's examinations of Jane Grey has already been cited as an example of this, and it is apparent in the other texts I discuss later in this Chapter. But the Protestant martyrological last will and testament literature may well have drawn also on what is known as the genre of the *ars moriendi,* literature about the art of dying (well), of dying without fear and with a clear conscience.

In *The Craft of Dying*[19] Nancy Beaty looks at the way the ostensibly liturgical early fifteenth-century devotional works on dying without fear of sin were transformed successively by humanistic, Protestant and Puritan notions in sixteenth-century *ars moriendi* pieces.[20] By looking at the different intellectual treatment of the human significance of death in *ars moriendi* texts by, among others, the humanist Thomas Lupset, the puritan Thomas Becon and the Elizabethan jesuit Robert Parsons, Beaty clearly reveals how central attitudes to death were as an expression of personal piety. For instance, she shows how Lupset's humanism in his *The Waye of Dyenge Well* (1534)[21] breaks the liturgical mould - and hence the power of the Church over the individual - of the medieval *ars moriendi* in the way that he 'challenges the traditional

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19 Nancy Lee Beaty, *The Craft of Dying: A Study in the Literary Tradition of the* Ars Moriendi *in England,* Yale Studies in English 175 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

20 On the *ars moriendi* see also: Sister Mary O'Connor, *The Art of Dying Well: The Development of the Ars moriendi* (New York Columbia University Press, 1942).

21 Thomas Lupset, *A compendious and a very fruteful treatyse, teachynge the waye of Dyenge well, written to a frende, by the flowre of lerned men of his tyme T. Lupsete* ... ([London]: Thomas Berthelet, 1534).

understanding of the power of sin and man's need for redemption',[22] and hence denies 'not only the coercive validity of sacramental discipline, but the sacramental view of life itself'.[23] The puritan theology of Becon's *The Syckmans Salue* (1560),[24] suggests Beaty, reveals a different refinement of the 'liturgical movement'[25] of the medieval devotional works on death: 'instead of an orientation to Everyman as obedient Churchman', she says, 'an orientation to Everyman as independent Protestant' is found, and the 'five-part theological pattern tracing the way of reconciliation to God' of the medieval *ars moriendi* becomes, in Becon's hands, 'a three-part combat depicting the way to triumph over the world, the flesh, and the devil'.[26] From Beaty's study it appears clear that not only was the outward display of the condition of one's conscience at the point of one's own death an important demonstration of piety, but, during the religious and pietistic controversies of the sixteenth century, the *ars moriendi* literature could consequently be used to lend veracity to partisan theological positions. In her article 'The Third Earl of Huntingdon's Death-Bed: A Calvinist Example of The Ars Moriendi'[27], Claire Cross draws the same conclusions, although for a much later piece, when she says that Nathaniel Gilby's account of the death of his patron the Earl of Huntingdon in 1595,[28] written in the style of the *ars moriendi,* was probably designed as a polemical attack on the Jesuit missionary priests in England. 'At a time', she says,

> when, as it seemed to Gilby, the forces of antichrist, in the persons of the missionary priests, were assembling against the children of light, and the triumph of northern Protestants was far from assured, the steadfastness of the Earl of Huntingdon in death as in life appeared of immense polemical significance. Throughout his history of Huntingdon's last days Gilby had depicted

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22 Beaty, *The Craft of Dying*, p.65.
23 Beaty, *The Craft of Dying*, pp.106-7.
24 Thomas Becon, *The Syckmans Salue* (London: John Day, 1560).
25 Beaty, *The Craft of Dying*, p.60.
26 Beaty, *The Craft of Dying*, pp.112-3.
27 Claire Cross, 'The Third Earl of Huntingdon's Death-Bed: A calvinist Example of The Ars Moriendi', *Northern History*, 21 (1985), 80-107.
28 Shropshire County Library, Local Studies Department, SPL MS 2592.

> Protestantism and patriotism as being inseparably linked: in his peroration he transformed what had begun as an account of the death-bed of a particular godly nobleman into a general vindication of the Protestant cause.[29]

The last will and testament writing of the radical Protestant authors with which I deal, drew on the currency of independence and anti-sacramental positions in the *ars moriendi* pieces of Lupset and Becon to create, not only Protestant devotional, but powerfully evangelistic propaganda. While the authors and texts I look at, and the very notion of 'last will and testament' discursive practices, are not discussed by Beaty, I consider them to be an important part of the developments and polemical possibilities of sixteenth-century *ars moriendi* literature.

In Chapter 2, I have already discussed the way in which Simon Fish's *Supplication for the Beggars* (1524 or 1529) was as much an anti-episcopal as an anti-clerical piece. I have also shown in each Chapter how Protestant propagandists appealed to anti-clerical sentiment, but channelled specific details of this into an attack on episcopal activities in particular. The case of Richard Hunne was given by Fish as an example of the excessive ecclesiastical charges exacted on parishioners for the burial of their relatives and the subsequent proving and execution of their wills. Fish stated his position on this very clearly. He had compiled a whole register on the various means by which the late-medieval church extorted money from parishioners and abandoned their souls to Hell in the process, and prominent among these was the institution of Purgatory. 'Whate money pull they [the clergy] yn by probates of testamentes', he exclaimed, and 'whate money get they by morturaries'.[30] Further, he explained, '[e]uery man and childe that is buried must pay sumwhat for masses and diriges to be song for him or elles they will accuse the dedes

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29 Claire Cross, 'The Third Earl of Huntingdon's Death-Bed', p.84.

30 Simon Fish, *A Supplication for the Beggars* (c. 1524/9), sig.A.ii.[r].

frendes and executours of heresie', and, as we shall see, this is exactly what happened in the case of a man named William Tracy, a Gloucestershire Justice of the Peace. I argue here that the pietistic and legal issues surrounding death were taken up by anti-episcopal propagndists, and refined, by the shaping of a martyrological deportment, into pieces of writing that denounced unreformed late-medieval English episcopacy. I have shown how similar refinements forged anti-clericalism generally into martyrological anti-episcopacy as well as creating anti-visitation and anti-examination discursive practices. Here I discuss the way in which certain propaganda texts condemned episcopal involvement in the processes of burial and proving wills as interfering and persecutory. There are many issues at stake here. First there is the actual judicial role of bishops in probate which was directly opposed as non-scriptural by reformers. Then, there is the contents of the wills, the obits, which could reflect and publicise the personal piety of the testator; and certain of these in turn raised matters of doctrine when obits directing the establishment of charitable endowments (chantries) were taken to express belief in the existence of Purgatory. I will explain these three points in turn to show why they were relevant to episcopacy, and how reform propaganda forged them into examples of how the modern English bishops were corrupt careerists who used an assumed ecclesiastical authority to persecute their opponents.

Regarding probate, Robert Swanson's detailed examination of the episcopal account books for the dioceses of Coventry and Lichfield shows that money from proving of wills went into episcopal coffers as a part of their revenue from spiritualities.[31] For the period he examines (c.1515-1540)

[31] R N Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in Later Medieval England: the Evidence for the Diociese of Coventry and Lichfield', *Midland History*, 13 (1988), 1-20. In the account books, revenue from probate comes under the heading of 'casualties' - occasional spiritual revenue - which also include receipts from: 'income from vacancies of churches; fines on proprietries for non-attendance at

Swanson calculates that for Lichfield diocese the 'most lucrative casualties throughout appear to have been probate receipts', and he concludes that 'the importance of probate to the spirituality revenues is obvious'.[32] From Swanson's research it is not difficult to see how English bishops were regular material beneficiaries of the money exacted from parishioners for probate. With this in mind it is not difficult either to see how dissatisfaction with having to pay money for the proving of a will could have been directed against English bishops in particular, as much as at the clerical estate generally. The Protestant understanding of the duties of a bishop, as presented in all the anti-episcopal propaganda, accorded to indications given in the Bible. These were that a bishop was a senior member of the church in the sense that he was a learned elder. But no judicial or temporal power, said the anti-episcopal reformers, was ascribed to *episcopi*, they acted merely in an advisory capacity. In their texts reformers depicted probate as just another example of the way in which *extra*-ecclesiastical status and power had accrued to the episcopal office and that these accretions served an acquisitive and persecutory set of English mercenary careerists. Thus anti-episcopal propagandists made use of original probate material to create a further discursive practice that attacked episcopacy. Such publications employed scripturalism and discourses of martyrdom, in conjunction with references to probate, to depict the institution of episcopacy as uncharitable, persecutory and lacking in scriptural support for its assumed credentials.

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visitation; fees for non-residence licences; income from commutation of penances and corrections; receipts from the custom of Derby archdeaconry which gave the bishop part of the mortuaries of beneficed clergy dying there; income from the confirmation of heads of religious houses; and reconciliations of churches' (p.5).

[32] Swanson, *Midland History*, p.5. In 1521-2 some £45 10s. 0d. in probate fees was due for collection in the diocese of Lichfield out of a total of £220-£235 a year for all spiritualities. Although, as Swanson points out, this is an exceptional year (showing nearly double the average figure for probate), generally probate receipts are a significant percentage of totals.

What about the contents of wills as expressions of piety? Well, in the absence of any propaganda framing devices, wills are of course official, legal documents that lay out how all land and financial assets/debts are to be settled on the testator's chosen inheritors. But, in *The Hour of Death,*[33] P. Aries argues that, while in classical civilization wills were used solely for the transmission of property, from the twelfth century they were increasingly considered as a declaration of piety, an essential part of the last rights of the testator. By the sixteenth century it was commonplace for a will to have a preamble in which the testator would commend his or her soul to God according to their faith. Consequently, during the Reformation wills often became religious documents (brief confessions of faith) that could play an important part in Reformation polemics if they were made public. Since one of the major doctrinal altercations of the Reformation was concerned with the efficacy of Purgatory and prayers for the dead, the arrangements that a testator would make for burial and memorial became a focal point in doctrinal altercations.

Purgatory and the related issue of prayers for the dead were *loci* central to the theological altercations between the Catholic and Protestant creeds. According to Catholic doctrine, on death certain souls were condemned for varying periods to Purgatory where they would undergo punishments as a form of penance for their worldly sins. Late-medieval Catholic religion encouraged two beliefs that focussed on this time spent in Purgatory. The first was that 'good works', acts of charity, counteracted worldly sin and thus reduced the time that would ultimately have to be spent in Purgatory. The second was that prayers by the living for dead souls in Purgatory could reduce the length of time they would have to spend there. As a result of this many testators who could

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[33] P. Aries, *The Hour of Death* (London: Athlone Press, 1981), pp.188-90.

afford it would make charitable edowments in their wills for financing, for example, a school, indulgences, portable altars, relics, the retaining of priests, pilgrimages, or the setting up of a 'chantry'. Chantries financed part or all of the livings for some priests because they provided money for regular obsequies like masses on behalf of the testator for varying periods of time after their death: they may also have included directions for the erection of a monument for this specific purpose.[34] As is manifest from a look at the doctrinal issues argued in early Protestant insurgent pieces like, for example, William Tyndale's *Practyse of Prelates*, Simon Fish's *Supplication,* William Barlow's *Dialogue betwene a Gentleman and a husbandman*, George Joye's *Letters* and Robert Barnes' *Supplication*, the existence of Purgatory and the efficacy of prayers for the dead were two of the key issues of contention discussed at length - the other being the nature of the sacrament. The standard Protestant position on faith (known as solifidianism) and Purgatory was, as can be seen from the example set by Lady Jane Grey, that justification by faith alone was the only route to redeeming the soul after death and that Purgatory was an apocryphal accretion. '[T]here be many men of greate litterature and iudgement', says Simon Fish in the *Supplication*,

> that for the loue they haue vnto the trouth and vnto the comen welth haue not feared to put theim silf ynto the greatest infamie that may be, in abiection of all the world, ye yn perill of deth to declare theyre oppinion in this matter whiche is that there is no purgatory but that it is a thing inuented by the couitousnesse of the spiritualtie onely to translate all kingdomes from other princes vnto theim and that there is not one word spoken of hit in al holy scripture.[35]

The doctrine of Purgatory and the practice of saying prayers for the dead was considered as just one means of extorting revenue from parishioners for the maintenance of the episcopal hierarchy of the unreformed church. In some

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[34] On chantries see: Clive Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service: Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36:1 (1985), 46-65; and P. W. Fleming, 'Charity, Faith, and the Gentry of Kent 1422-1529', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. by A. J. Pollard (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984), pp.36-58.

[35] Simon Fish, *A Supplication for the Beggars* (c. 1524/9), sig.A.vi.[r].

cases it was considered to be nothing short of simony. But, Fish explained, the clergy protected the exactions realised through the institution of Purgatory by using the heresy law to denounce their accusers:

> Lyke wyse saie they [Protestant authors] of all the hole sort of the spiritueltie that if they will not pray for no man but for theim that gyue theim money they are tyrauntes and lakke charite and suffer those soules to be punisshed and payned vncheritably for lacke of theyre prayers. These sort of folkes they [the clergy] call heretikes, these they burne, these they rage ageinst, put to open shame and make theim bere fagottes.[36]

Protestant reform propaganda interpolated, in printed form, the anti-episcopal martyrological discourse of last will and testament in order to attack chantries, and masses for the dead as corrupt and to argue that the money tied up in these pietistically misguided obsequies should be used for the provision of livings for a better educated clergy and a preaching ministry. A letter of Nicholas Ridley, already discussed in Chapter 3 as an important figure in the fashioning of a martyr's bearing, offers just one example of the Protestant concern that 'preaching' positions were being filled through episcopal or secular patronage by 'non-preaching' incumbents. Ridley's letter was addressed to John Cheke and dated July 1551.[37] In it he argued against the impropriation of a prebendary at St. Paul's Cathedral by one of the Privy Council. Ridley first mentioned three chaplains and, remarking on their ability to preach and the importance of this, he named two of them as John Grindal and John Bradford. A prebend at St. Paul's (called 'Cantrelles'), he said, had become vacant by the death of one Layton. Pointing out that the prebend was worth £34 a year, Ridley said that he wanted to establish Grindal as the incumbent because he was well qualified. He explained however, how he was being thwarted in this endeavour to appoint a Protestant preacher by William Thomas, a clerk to the

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36 Simon Fish, *A Supplication for the Beggars* (c. 1524/9), sigs. A.vi.[r-v].

37 This letter is reproduced in Miles Coverdale, *Certain most godly, fruitful, and comfortable letters of such true Saintes and holy Martyrs of God, as in the late bloodye persecution here within this Realme, gaue their lyues for the defence of Christes holy gospel: written in the yme of theyr affliction and cruell imprysonment* (London: John Day, 1564), ff.683-685.

Council, who had already been trying to perpetually alienate the prebend to his family even before the death of Layton ('[o]ne Master William Thomas, one of the clerks to the council, hath in times past set the council upon me, to have me to grant that Layton might have alienated the said prebend unto him and his heirs for ever'[38]). Ridley explained that he had been further beleaguered by the Council over this issue but did not consent to the alienation. 'Alas Syr', he exclaimed to Sir John Cheke, when he had heard that, finally, the collation of the prebendary had been taken out of his hands,

> this is a heauy hearing. When papistrye was taught, there was nothing too litle for the teachers, when y^e^ Bishop gaue his benefices vnto idiotes, vnlearned, vngodlye, for kindred, for pleasure, for seruice, + other worldly respectes, all was then wel allowed. Now, where a poore liuing is to be geuen vnto an excellent Clarke, [i.e. Grindal] a man knowen + tryed to haue both discretion + also vertue, + such a one as before god, I do not know a man yet vnplaced + unprouided for, more meete to set forth gods word in al Englande: when a poore liuing (I say) which is founded for a preacher, is to be geuen vnto such a man, that then an vngodly person shal procure in this sorte letters to stoppe + lette the same, alas M. Cheke, this seemeth vnto me to be a ryght heauy hearing.[39]

Here in his letter to Cheke Ridley was making a direct attempt to frustrate what he considered to be a corrupt use of ecclesiastical positions and revenue, and the investment tied up in chantries and masses for the dead was also considered to be a major example of such abuse. Last will and testament discourses in martyrological propaganda were used to expose these practices, and intervene in this argument that Protestant insurgents had with the unreformed church where perhaps patronage and influence at Court might have failed.

In 'Charity, Faith, and the Gentry of Kent 1422-1529',[40] P W Fleming has shown from the examination of 200 wills that the custom for making charitable endowments and establishing chantries was certainly declining among the

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38 *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, ed. by Henry Christmas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), p.332.

39 Quoted from Miles Coverdale, *Certain letters*, f.684.

40 In *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. by A. J. Pollard (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984), pp.36-58.

gentry of Kent in the century leading up to the Reformation in England. She shows that individual investments in these purgatorial institutions had varied considerably from parish to parish, but that certainly the collective economic investment in this practice had been substantial. Because Fleming points out that the charitable endowments and chantry monuments were a material means of increasing the prestige of a family in the locality as well as a possible reflection of their personal belief, I would suggest that the decline in their popularity is a sign of the waning belief in the veracity of Purgatory among all sections of the society: if those who were supposed to be impressed by the chantry monuments did not believe in Purgatory, chantries would only serve to denigrate the testator in their eyes. In a similar way to Fleming, several historians have recognised that wills of the sixteenth century could have been used as a demonstration of faith, and that therefore they might be used as evidence of the piety of groups of testators in general and for different areas.[41] This is a controversial issue within Reformation studies because there is such disagreement over the condition of popular piety for this period.

In her article 'Wills as evidence of popular piety in the reformation period: Leeds and Hull, 1540-1640'[42] Claire Cross points out that A. G. Dickens pioneered the use of testament preambles and obits in support of his argument for widespread anti-clericalism on the eve of the English Reformation in his *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York* (1959) and *The English Reformation* (1964).[43] P. W. Fleming in her article above, 'Charity, Faith and the

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41 For example see also Clive Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service: Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36:1 (1985), 46-65.

42 In *The End of Strife*, ed. by David Loades (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1984), pp.44-51.

43 As other examples Cross also gives: D. M. Palliser, *The Reformation in York 1534-1553* (Borthwick Papers no. 40, York, 1971), pp.19-21, 27-32; M. Spufford, *Contrasting Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp.320-44; R. C. Richardson, 'Wills and will-makers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: some Lancashire evidence', *Local Population Studies*, 9, (1972), pp.33-42; M. L. Zell, 'The Use of Religius Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth

Gentry of Kent', uses 200 wills dating from 1422-1529 to assess possible shifts in religious belief by looking at attitudes to charity (as good works) and faith among the gentry of Kent; and in his study of the attempts at a settlement of the church in Sussex under Elizabeth, Roger Manning[44] uses the frequency of testament obits providing for prayers or alms from 1552-60 in an attempt to assess the continuance of Catholic practices in Sussex on the eve of the Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity. Other historians have followed suit and, while they never pretend that such probate evidence should be considered as a scientific gauge, they do use the wills as evidence of the testators' belief. Cross points out that one of the main problems with the historical use of testament preambles as indicators of piety, is that there is strong evidence to suggest that during the sixteenth century the composition of wills was made by a notary, through whom the preamble took on an official standard form. This represents a barrier to using the preamble as a window on individual testator's beliefs. Despite such problems in assessing the veracity of supportive historical evidence based on testament preambles, it is absolutely clear that early reformist writers fashioned a martyrological discourse that presented both preambles and obits of wills as confessions of the Protestant faith. In the cases of testators who had clashed with bishops this was also forged into anti-episcopal propaganda, another martyrological discourse used in the ideological battle against English episcopacy.

Like modern historians, Protestant polemicists saw that the type of testament obits made in a will were an indication of faith. But, further to this,

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Century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 50 (1977), pp.246-9; P. Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester, 1977), pp.58-9, 76-7.

[44] Roger Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex: A study in the enforcement of the religious settlement, 1558-1603* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1969).

they also saw that these could be put into print with some form of commentary upon the text in the style peculiar to that deployed for anti-episcopal martyrology. In this form they saw that the wills and testaments would serve as an attack on episcopal jurisdiction against Protestantism, and as a celebration of solifidianism. Discussion of Protestant testament obits could portray episcopal persecution, because it was a dramatic insight into the 'dying wishes' of its writer being opposed by bishops. This, of course, would be most effective if the testator held a prominent position or was a well-known Protestant - or could be shown to be either of these things when the testament was put into print.

The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie,[45] first anonymously published in 1535, reveals the dynamics of testament discursive practice and the way in which it contributed to Protestant anti-episcopacy. It was reprinted three times after 1535 as part of *Wycliffes Wicket* (ed. by Miles Coverdale) in 1546, 1548 and 1550, so it was widely disseminated. William Tracy was a Justice of the Peace in 'Todyngton', Gloucester in the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII. He was therefore a relatively prominent figure in his community and could be expected to provide certain charitable donations within the community if he followed the custom of Catholic testators' demonstrations of charity (good works) and faith by setting up chantries.[46] The *Testament of Tracie* comprised a preface 'To the reader', the 'Testament of William Tracie' (a transcription of his official will) and two commentaries on the testament by reformers - one by William Tyndale and one by John Frith.

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[45] Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie esquier expounded both by William Tindall and John Frith. Wher in thou shalt perceyue with what charitie y^e^ chaunceler of worcetter Burned whan he toke vp the deed carkas and made asshes of hit after hit was buried. M. D. xxxv* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1535)

[46] See P. W. Fleming, 'Charity Faith and the Gentry of Kent'; Roger Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex*; and Clive Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service: Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol' cited above.

In order to highlight the authenticity of his material, the editor's preamble to *The Testament* as published in 1535, like that of John Bale with his life of Lord Cobham, gave a history of the MS of Tracy's will and how it came to his hands. This preface and the commentaries clearly show the deployment of the discursive practice of last will and testament and place this piece within the formative anti-episcopal tradition. The preface reflects not only on the martyrdom of the testator Tracy, but also upon that of the commentators Frith, burnt as a heretic in 1531, and Tyndale, who was awaiting execution for translating and printing the New Testament in the vernacular. 'Thou shalt vnderstande most deare Reader', the preface says,

> that after Wylliam Tyndall was soo Judaslie betrayed by an English man a scoler of Louaine whose name is Philippes there were certaine thinges of his doynge founde: which he had entended to haue putforthe to the furtheraunce of goddes woorde amongest which was this Testamant of master Tracie expounded by hym sealffe where vnto was annexed the exposicion of the same of Jhon Frithes doynge and awne hand wrytinge which I haue caused to be put in Printe to the intente that al the worlde shulde see howe ernistlye the Cannonistes and spiritual lawyers (which be the chefe rulars vnder bysshopes in euerye dioces in so moche that in euery chatedrall church the deane chanceler and archdeken ar commenly doctoures or bachelers of lawe) do endeuer them sealues iustlie to iuge and spirituallye to geue sentence accordinge to charitye apon all the actes and dedes done of their diocessanes.[47]

This glorifies Tracy's Protestant piety, as well as the 'exposicion' of his will given by Tyndale and Frith. Tyndale is brought into the frame as recently 'Judaslie betrayed' for his endeavours to have the New Testament rendered into the vernacular and the editor recognises and points out Frith's own handwriting in the second commentary. In the context of probate all three figures were depicted as the poor victims of a cruel episcopal persecution. In addition to this, the fact that the editor said in his history of the text that Tracy's testament was already 'expounded' by Tyndale 'hym sealffe' - the great translator and commentator on the Bible - and an exposition of it was also found in Frith's 'awne hand wrytinge' suggests that the reader 'shal[l]

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47 Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.ii.[r].

vnderstande' that Tracy's testament was an important work of piety. The will of this Justice of the Peace had been subjected to the same scrutiny by Tyndale and Frith, said the editor, as that of the Bible.

The collective exegesis surrounding the somatic death of Tracy also demonstrates once again how the bodies of Protestant martyrs were portrayed as vessels through which scripture could be understood. Tracy's body was the central element around which *The Testament* was structured. But this structuring did not emphasise, as with late-medieval Catholic piety, the physicality of Tracy's corporeal remains (if, indeed, there were any after exhumation and incineration by the episcopal authorities) as a locus of veneration. On the contrary Tracy's death bequeathed a text - his last will and testament - which presented a clear exposition of solifidianism and a positive antipathy towards 'good works' (participation in a prescribed set of observances defined and controlled by the Church) as a route to salvation. These Protestant declarations directed the readers of *The Testament* towards the life of Jesus as described by the evangelists in the New Testament, and the commentaries of Tyndale and Frith provided an extended exegesis, with scriptural citation, refuting the existence of Purgatory. Furthermore, the episcopal condemnation and heretication of Tracy (the formal proscription, exhumation and burning of his carnal remains) provided a compelling set of circumstances which served not as a reinforcement of the status and authority of the Church and its Tudor bishops as was intended, but as a signal that the episcopal hierarchy was the executive arm of a corrupt Church. This signal was the first in a series of signposts which, as the commentaries of the editor, Tyndale and Frith unfolded, directed the reader away from any significance which may have been attached

to Tracy's somatic presence, towards a clear exposition of the scriptural position on justification by faith and Purgatory.

According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, William Tracy had adopted 'Lutheran' views by the time of his death c.1530. Although 'Lutheran' is a rather broad term to describe articles of faith in this period it may be a fairly accurate description of Tracy's testament, which showed a firm solifidianism and a refutation of Purgatory (implicit in his denial of the efficacy of the dispersal of charitable goods in return for prayers for his soul). The preamble to Tracy's will certainly opposed justification by faith to the Catholic doctrines of Purgatory and good works. It reads:

> as towching the wealth of my sowle y^{e} faith that I haue taken and rehersed is sufficient (as I suppose) w^{t} out any other mannis worke or workis. My gronnde + my belefe is that ther is but one god + one mediatour betwene god + man which is Jesus christ.[48]

Justification by faith alone was Tracy's dying belief. That he protested this in his will, the book suggested, indicated that he was one of the community of the faithful whose salvation did not depend on any priestly intervention from the formally-constituted 'Church'. Tracy made a further pronouncement of Protestant piety in his will, and attacked Purgatory, chantries and prayers for the dead, when he stipulated:

> I do except none in heauen nor in erth to be my mediatoure betwene me and god but onely Jesus Christ al other be but peticioners in receyuinge of grace but none able to geue influence of grace. And therfore wil I bestowe no part of my goodes for that intent that any man shulde saye or do to healp my soule for therin I trust onely to the promyse of god he that beleueth and is baptyzed shalbe saued and he that beleueth not shalbe damned marcke the last chapter.[49]

The obits of Tracy's will left all his temporal goods to his wife and son. But, just in case this may have been misconstrued he even qualified this provision by saying that this method of dispersal was not intended as an aid to the progress of his soul. Tracy's preamble showed that he made a particular point of

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[48] Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.iii.^{r}.

[49] Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.iii.^{v}.

opposing the custom of establishing chantries and the reform propagandists were quick to expound upon this.

In addition to its being printed, Tracy's testament of justification by faith would ordinarily have gained a limited public hearing in the normal course of probate and one can assume from this that it could have been intended by Tracy as a model for the community to follow. Such an assumption is perhaps easier to make when we also know that the Convocation of 1532 declared Tracy's will heretical, whereupon the chancellor of Worcester ordered the exhumation and burning of Tracy's body. Tracy, then was posthumously declared a heretic by the English episcopal hierarchy who made their decision based upon the provisions laid out in his last will and testament. Their burning of his body can be seen as a counter-attack on the Protestantism that Tracy had made apparent through his testament obits. For the reformers, the 1532 Convocation pronouncement of heresy and the subsequent burning of Tracy's defenceless body became another example of the rapacious violence that the bishops and their chancellors inflicted on their pious parishioners. The interference of the episcopal hierarchy in matters of probate was clearly flagged here. Convocation, the institutional embodiment of English episcopacy, was shown to reach into every corner of the parish and spare not even the most pious or the deceased and their relatives.

If the editor considered that Tracy's will expounded true piety according to the Protestant faith, why then did he also praise the very Catholic institutions of 'Cannonistes and spiritual lawyers' for their earnest 'endeuer... iustlie to iuge and spirituallye to geue sentence accordinge to charitye apon all the actes and dedes done of their diocessanes'?[50] The editor's approbation of the

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50 Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.ii.[r].

ecclesiastical hierarchy responsible for pronouncing judgement on Tracy and others served as an oblique sarcastic form of criticism. The irony was that, in contrast to the Protestant piety and good conduct of the testator, the editor suggested, the bishop of Worcester's deputies were not charitable at all, but persecutors. In his aside on the episcopal hierarchy (the Canonists and spiritual lawyers - arbiters of the ecclesiastical courts - 'be the chefe rulars vnder bysshoppes in euerye dioces') the editor showed that it was this whole institution which was at fault. The whole episcopal hierarchy - including bishop, 'deane chanceler and archdeken' - was depicted as administering a corrupt judicial machinery that employed the law and doctrine of the Pope (Canon Law). The antiphrasis of the preface continued to ridicule the post-obit episcopal proscription of Tracy, when the editor said that the activities of the Canonists and spiritual lawyers followed:

> ...the ensaumple of the chaunceler of worcetter which after master Tracie was buried (of pure zeale and loue hardelye) toke vp the deede carkas and burnt hit wherfore he did hit it shall euidentlye apere to y[e] reader in this littell treatyse reade hit therfore I beseche the and iuge the spirites of oure spiritualitie and praye that the spirite of him that reased vp Christe maye ones inhabite them + mollyfye their hertes and so illumine them that they maye bothe se and shewe true light and no longer to resiste God ner his trueth Amen.[51]

The chancellor of Worcester's 'charity' then consisted of exhuming the defenceless body of Tracy and burning the remains based on an untried/unjustified charge of heresy. Tracy was executed as a heretic by the bishop of Worcester's chancellor without proper trial. The editor here used the term 'charity' to refer to the antithesis of Christian charity, just as when Robert Barnes referred to the charity of the bishop of Bath's comment that he would make Barnes 'frye'.[52] The editorial deployment of Protestant anti-episcopal martyrology here portrayed Catholic or episcopal 'charity' as theologically

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51 Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.ii.[r-v].

52 In his *A Supplycatyon* (1531), as discussed in Chapter 3.

unsound and the infliction of severe self-interested prejudice upon Protestant victims. It showed how the continued validation, by the Tudor episcopate, of charitable donations and prayers for the dead, was a counteractive measure adopted against the spread of Protestant piety. Presumably, the case of William Tracy was relatively well known because of his position as a Justice of the Peace at Toddington, the public outcry surrounding the posthumous pronouncement of heresy upon him and the exhumation and burning of his body. The printing of the testament with the appended commentaries by Tyndale and Frith further popularised the case of William Tracy as an example in the history of the persecuted Protestant church. At the same time - something which has not hitherto been noted about this type of martyrological writing - it rendered episcopal administration of the church as being based on corrupt doctrine, poor judgement and the blood-thirsty motives of all the members of the Cathedral close.

Tyndale's commentary on Tracy's testament repeated the attack on the corruptions that had entered ecclesiastical protocol through the custom of testament obits for chantries and prayers:

> if he had knowen of any good man amonge them that had neded he wolde haue geuen and if he had knowen of any lacke of Pristes he wolde haue geuen to mayntene moo: But nowe sence there be moe then I knowe and haue more then euery man a sufficient lyuynge how shulde he haue geuen them but to hyre theyr prayers of pure mystrust in Christes bloude? yf robbinge of wydowes howses vnder pretence of longe prayers be damnable. Matthe.xxiii. Then is it damnable also for wydows to suffer them selues to be robbed by the longe patterynge of hypocrites thorow mystrust in Christes bloude: ye + is it not damnable to mayntene soch abhominacions?[53]

If it had been to the benefit of the English clergy, said Tyndale, Tracy would have left money to provide a living for a priest. But, because there were so many idle priests - maintained already by chantry bequests that, inherently, did not encourage preaching or knowledge of the Scripture - Tracy did not want to

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[53] Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. A.viii^{v}.

do this.[54] Tyndale referred to Matthew 23:14[55] (which is part of a sustained attack by Jesus on abuses practised through the assumed status and power of scribes and Pharisees), saying that the customs of establishing chantries and saying prayers for the dead were simply the 'robinge of wydowes howses vnder pretence of longe prayers'. Central to Tyndale's argument against this Catholic doctrine was the justification of faith in Christ's suffering on the Cross as mankind's redemption - a point that Tracy himself was so careful to explain. Tyndale said that if Tracy had followed the custom of establishing chantries he would merely have been contributing to the size of the existent ill-educated, non-preaching ministry, and he would have been following a doctrine that usurped the place of Christ's suffering for the redemption of mankind ('mystrust in Christes bloude'). According to Tyndale, testament obits that provided for chantries in any form were 'damnable' and 'abhominacions'.

Tyndale also made explicit the attack on episcopacy that was implicit in the editor's wry remarks about the 'charity' of the Convocation and the chancellor of Worcester in their burning of Tracy after his death. Tyndale said:

> Thowgh hit seme not impossible haplye that there myght be a place where the soules myght be kept for a space to be taught and instruct: yet that ther shuld be such a Jayle as they [the Convocation that condemned him] Jangle and soch facyons as they fayne is playne impossible and repugnaunt to the scripture.[56]

Once again the reader was presented with images of the gaol and the 'jangle' (clamour) of bishops' citations, both so familiar to the reformers' experience of episcopal policing processes. We are already familiar with these images of imprisonment and examination from descriptions by George Joye and Robert Barnes. Contemporary readers would have associated the belief in Purgatory

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[54] See the discussion above on chantry obits and Ridley's letter to Cheke that draws attention to the appointment of ill-educated, non-preaching ministers for the remuneration provided by the post alone.

[55] 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation', *King James Version*.

[56] Anon, *The Testament of master Wylliam Tracie*, sig. B.ii.[r].

as a kind of gaol with that of episcopal examination. Tyndale's commentary on the main points of Tracy's last will and testament thus associated contemporary episcopacy with corrupt doctrine (Purgatory), increasing the effect of connoting unreformed Tudor episcopacy as a contaminated institution. The bishops' own activities as persecuting examiners, revealed in other anti-episcopal types of propaganda condemned them as supporters of a gaol-like Purgatory. Tyndale set this against the Protestant hope (although he did not state that there was any kind of Purgatorial state for the soul) that 'there myght be a place where the soules myght be kept for a space to be taught and instruct': episcopal persecution was replaced by Protestant education and instruction in piety. Tyndale followed this anti-examination rhetoric with a condemnation of the Convocation for burning Tracy saying that if they had doubted his belief he should have been at least called to answer charges when he was alive.

The texts of last wills and testaments then were sites in which doctrinal, economic and political issues central to the English Reformation were located. But, because of the status inherent in the custom of chantry bequests and the challenge that the new Protestant doctrine made to this power, and because of the public display naturally occurring from the probate process, wills were potentially very good for anti-episcopal propaganda. Because, also, the testament was potentially a death-bed confession it became an appropriate declaration for the shaping of the martyrological attitude. From it, radical reformers developed a discursive practice that contributed to the substantial opposition to English episcopacy already created by their other anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom. This clarifies exactly what John Banks was driving at in his letter to Henry Bullinger and why he was so excited about printing such

things as Jane Grey's protestation of solifidianism to Feckenham just a few days before her death. Tracy's *Testament* is an example of the early use of such a martyrological discourse and suggests that at least by the 1550s contemporary audiences could have easily followed the textual logic of last will and testament discursive practices.

It is clear that Miles Coverdale also used last will and testament discursive practices in conceiving *Wickliffes Wicket* (1546 and 1548).[57] Coverdale (c.1488-1568) was at one time bishop of Exeter (under Edward VI), but what is known of his career shows that he was a Protestant reformer with long periods of exile during the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary I. He was also unable to conform to the religious order set up under Elizabeth I. Coverdale was educated at Cambridge and entered the order of the Austin Friars at Cambridge in 1514. He was involved with Robert Barnes in the White Horse Tavern circle at Cambridge, a group of reformers who met to discuss Protestant ideas. When Barnes was called to London in 1525 to defend himself against charges of heresy, Coverdale loyally accompanied him. In 1527 Cromwell gave Coverdale money to buy theological books but in 1528 he was abandoned by Cromwell as unsafe when he became a secular priest and began to preach beyond the bounds of orthodoxy. During 1528-34 Coverdale was propably in exile in Antwerp and Hamburg with Tyndale. In 1534 he received money from the Protestant printer in Antwerp, Jacob van Meteren, to

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[57] There are two extant editions known as *Wickliffes Wicket* dated 1546 and 1548. Both books actually contain not only the piece known as 'Wickliffes Wicket' - which is an edited text of Wycliffe's writing on the Lord's Supper - but a collection of other sixteenth century pieces too. The two editions are slightly different. 1546 does not have an editorial presence in the form of prefaces or commentary but contains 'Wycklyfes Wycket: whyche he made in Kyng Rychards days the second in the yere of our lorde God M.CCC.XLV' and part of the *Testament of Tracie* as far as the end of Tyndale's commentary but not including that of Frith. The 1548 edition has an epistle to the reader, 'Wicklieffes Wicket, faythfully ouerseene and corrected after the originall and first copie' followed by a short commentary, 'The protestacion and confession of Jhon Lasselles', and the whole test of the *Testament of Tracie*. 1548 reads 'overseen by MC' on the last page which Pollard and Redgrave, *Short Title Catalogue* logically interprets as Miles Coverdale. I refer here to the 1548 edition and accept the 'MC' as Miles Coverdale.

finance the prining of the first translation of the whole Bible into English. Based on German and Latin sources and Tyndale's translations, this was printed in Cologne and smuggled into England during 1535. In 1539 Coverdale went to England to work on the Great Bible upon the request of Cromwell. After the fall of Cromwell in 1540 he returned to exile. 1541 was the probable publication date of *A confutacion* which was a defence of his old friend Robert Barnes' *Protestation* (a classic martyrological propaganda piece showing Barnes' dying belief and published immediately following his execution). In 1548 at the beginning of the reign of Edward VI Coverdale was resident at Windsor in Cranmer's company and later under the Protestant policy of Edward VI from 1551-1553 he was Bishop of Exeter. In 1553 upon the accession of the Catholic Mary he was deprived of his bishopric, whereupon he returned into exile, first preaching to English refugees at Wesel and then moving on to Bergzabern and Geneva in 1558. Upon the accession of Elizabeth I in 1559, Coverdale returned to England but not as a bishop, and in 1563 he refused the See of Llandaff which shows that, like many others, Coverdale's Protestant beliefs were more radical than those which were used to establish the settlement of religious practice under Elizabeth I. In 1566 he resigned his living of St Magnus near London Bridge, because of his refusal to conform, as required by the contemporary episcopate. During this whole period Coverdale wrote and had published several anti-episcopal martyrological pieces[58] that made use of the discursive practice of last will and testament literature.

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[58] These include his *A confutacion of that treatise which one John Standish made agaynst the protestacion of D. Barnes in the yeare M. D. XL. Wherin the holy scriptures (peruerted and wrested in his sayd treatise) are restored to their owne true vnderstonding agayne by Myles Couerdale* (Zurich: Christoph Froschauer, [1541?]), *Wicliffes Wicket* (1546 and 1548), and later his collections of posthumous letters such as *Certain most godly, fruitful, and comfortable letters of such true Saintes and holy Martyrs of God, as in the late bloodye persecution here within this Realme, gaue their lyues for the defence of Christes holy gospel: written in the tyme of theyr affliction and cruell imprysonment* (London: John Day, 1564).

The 1548 edition of *Wickliffes Wicket,* contains four separate narratives: Coverdale's epistolary commentaries, a text of the fourteenth-century reformer, John Wycliffe's concerning the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, one John Lascells' last will and testament at Smithfield on the same, and Tracy's will, also dealing with the same issue. Coverdale's selection of texts in *Wickliffes Wicket* was not arbitrary. The authors of the three main texts that Coverdale included - John Wycliffe, William Tracy and John Lascells - were all martyrs, witnessess to the Protestant church. Further to this the narrative of *Wickliffes Wicket* from start to finish presented the Protestant view on the sacrament of the 'Lord's Supper'. All the texts included in Coverdale's book - Luke 22:15-20, Tracy's *Last Will and Testament*, Wycliffe's 'On the last supper' and Lascells' 'Confession' - were either the last will and testament of their author or discussed the last will and testament of another, ostensibly that of Christ at his 'last supper'.[59] So anagogically the texts of Wycliffe, Tracy and Lascells were presented as last wills and testaments that referred back to Christ's last words about his sacrifice, 'Hoc est corpus meum' (This is my body). In *Wyclif's Wicket* Coverdale created a chronological intertextual tradition of verity about the inefficacy of transubstantiation. Coverdale's book shows how the truth about transubstantiation began with the Word of God as shown through Christ and recorded in the scripture, and was subsequently reiterated by Wycliffe, Tracy and Lascells. The true prophets of God's Word, said Coverdale, had always been persecuted and as an early example of this he referred to Elijah's story of, he said, the wicked Phoenician Queen Jezebel, as recorded in 1:Kings 16:29-22:40. The belief in transubstantiation, said Coverdale, had been

[59] There are three versions of what Jesus said and did at his Last Supper: Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25; and Luke 22:15-20. In the New Testament the only full discussion of the subsequent communion meal, which had come to be celebrated in memory of the Last Supper, is in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, where Paul refers to it as 'the Lord's Supper'.

established by a false interpretation of scripture to bolster the 'Antichristian raygne'.[60]

That the sacraments of bread and wine bear the real presence of Christ, Coverdale said, is an 'interpretation not onely voyde of all wyt + learninge: but also playnely repugnant to the texte'.[61] In the same way, the texts of Wycliffe's treatise, Tracy's will and Lascells' dying confession all argue against transubstantiation. In his choice of texts Coverdale presented not merely dead heroes of the Protestant church, but martyrs who repeatedly pointed to the Bible (the passage from Luke in particular), and, through their own explanations, asserted the falsity and repugnance to God's Word of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. 'Now answerest thou' taunts Wycliffe to his Catholic audience, 'and sayest that euery day thou makest of bread the body of the Lorde the fleshe + bloud of Jesu Christ god and man'.[62] Catholic priests could not make Christ every day at communion, said Wycliffe, and as proof he gave a detailed exposition of the passage in Luke which recounts the events of Christ's Last Supper. 'It was the lorde Jesus', said Lascells,

> that made the super whyche also dyd fynyshe it and made an ende of the onelye acte of oure saluacyon not onelye here in thys worlde, but wyth hys father in heauen as he declareth him selfe. That he wyll drinke no more of thys bytter cupe tyll he drynke it newe in hys fathers kyngdome where all bytternes shalbe taken awaye.[63]

'Hoc est corpus meum', continued Lascells,

> was spoken of hys naturall presens which no man is able to denye, bycause the acte was fynyshed on the crosse, and the storye dothe plainely manifest it to them that haue eyes. Nowe thys bloudy sacryfyce is made an ende of, the supper is fynyshed.[64]

The real presence of Christ occurred only at the original Lord's Supper before his execution on the cross, argued Lascells. The word 'Hoc est corpus meum'.

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60 M[iles] C[overdale], *Wickliffes Wicket* ([n.p.: n.pub.], 1548), sig. A.i.^{v}.
61 M[iles] C[overdale], *Wickliffes Wicket*, sig.A.ii.^{v}.
62 M[iles] C[overdale], *Wickliffes Wicket*, sig.A.vi.^{r}.
63 M[iles] C[overdale], *Wickliffes Wicket*, sig. B.viii.^{r}.
64 M[iles] C[overdale], *Wickliffes Wicket* sig. B.viii.^{r}.

he maintained were spoken by Christ of his own body and not the bread. Like Wycliffe, for this reason Lascells concluded that the presence of Christ in the sacraments was spiritual only and could only be received by those who believed. It is plain, Lascells continued later, that the sacraments refer to a spiritual presence of Christ only, because Judas received the bread and the wine at the Last Supper but did not actually receive Christ spiritually: this is why he was able to betray him.

The discursive practice of testament as one of the discourses of martyrdom made a significant contribution to the authenticity of the Protestant church. Because 'heretics' were revealed as martyrs and bishops as persecutors in the model that the discourse of martyrdom created, the English episcopal policing of the Reformation was implicitly attacked. The execution by strangling and burning of John Lascells, Anne Askew, John Hemley, and John Hadlam together at Smithfield in July 1546, not to mention the earlier executions of John Frith and William Tyndale, and the posthumous burning of William Tracy were all brought together in *Wickliffes Wicket*. Implicit reference was also made to Wycliffe's own martyrdom and that of countless others - including the original martyrdom of Christ. The discursive practice of testament literature worked in such a way, then, as to contribute - with other more explicit forms - to the Protestant strike at the episcopal hierarchy. It was John Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, along with chancellor Wriothesley who hunted down the group headed by John Lascells, including Anne Askew, John Hemley and John Hadlam, in an attempt to discredit Catharine Parr and her Protestant influence at court. As sewer of the king's bedchamber and a leading force in a prominent Protestant group, John Lascells was associated with Parr's Protestantism at

court.[65] 'Lascells and not Anne Askew', says A. G. Dickens in *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York*, 'was the leading spirit of the group which Gardiner and Wriothesley took pains to destroy because of its close personal contact with the king'.[66] *Wickliffes Wicket* answered this reactionary episcopal policing with last will and testament propaganda that at the same time continued to celebrate the efficacy of solifidianism and denounce the corruption inherent in Purgatory and chantries.

In *A confutacion of that treatise which one John Standish made agaynst the protestacion of D. Barnes* (c.1541),[67] Miles Coverdale had earlier made the same propagandist attack on the bishops and their supporters that had led the reactionary phase of the Henrician Reformation against Protestantism. In the early 1540s many of the leading English Protestants were in exile on the continent but they received much information of events in England from the reports of sympathetic Dutch, German or other merchants residing in England. Dutch and German printers were also equally eager to publish material that showed what could happen to Protestants and Protestantism in a persecutory Catholic regime. Coverdale's *Confutacion* defended the 'protestation' (the last will and testament that Barnes had made at the scaffold during his execution and which was subsequently put into print) against *A lytle treatise composyd by Johan Stadysshe ... against the ptestacion*[sic] *of Robert Barnes at the tyme of his death*[68] which had attempted to establish the inefficacy of Barnes' dying

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[65] On this see, for example, John N. King, 'Patronage and Piety: The Influence of Catherine Parr', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985), pp.43-60 and A. G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants* below.

[66] A. G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), p.34.

[67] *A confutacion of that treatise which one John Standish made agaynst the protestacion of D. Barnes in the yeare M. D. XL. Wherin the holy scriptures (peruerted and wrested in his sayd treatise) are restored to their owne true vnderstonding agayne by Myles Couerdale* (Zurich: Christoph Froschauer, [1541?]).

[68] (London: Robert Redman, 1540).

protestation, his last will and testament. In doing this, Coverdale's *Confutacion* printed the first English version of Barnes' last will and testament at the executioner's torch.[69] The reforming activities and court career of Robert Barnes have already been discussed in the Chapter on examination and visitation. Despite his brief period of patronage at court through Thomas Cromwell, Barnes' Protestant convictions could not countenance such conservatives as John Gardiner, and his sermon against this bishop at Paul's Cross in 1539 eventually led to his arraignment under the new conservatism of the Six Articles. He was burnt as a heretic at Smithfield in 1540. 'That the wordes of .D. Barnes spoken at the houre of his death and here vnder written are good [and] wholsome acording to gods holy scripture and not worthy to be euell taken...', asserted Coverdale in the *Confutacion*,

> shalbe euidently sene whan we haue layed them to the twychstone and tryed them by gods worde. To the open text wherof yf ye take good hede ye shal se the peruerse doctryne and wycked opynions of Standish clerely confuted.[70]

According to Coverdale here, liminality was not the important point of Barnes' martyrdom - although the episcopal authority that judged him a heretic would have liked the destruction of his body to have been the death of his opinions. Rather, his death allowed his divinely inspired words to be uttered and live on in the text of his protestation. And, as was characteristic of Protestant martyrological writing, Barnes' last words guided the reader directly to the Bible ('acording to gods holy scripture' and 'whan we haue layed them to the twychstone and tryed them by gods worde'). Hence, what was intended by the authorities to be the public denunciation and just destruction of a heretic and heretical opinion was transformed by the textual logic of protestant martyrology

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[69] Barnes' dying 'protestation' had appeared in a German edition the previous year as *Bekantnus dess Glaubens, die Doctor Robertus Barus [sic]* (M. Raminger: Augsberg, 1540).

[70] Coverdale, *A confutacion*, sig. A.iii.[r].

into an event that, on the contrary, was significant as a divinely inspired apocalyptic revelation.

Furthermore, post-obit, it was not the body of Barnes *in itself* that was important to his martyrologists, but the way in which it functioned as an active vessel through which godly disclosure could be effected. One important disclosure made by Barnes during his dying protestantion, reproduced and glossed here by Coverdale in the *Confutacion,* was his continued belief in solifidianism (justification by faith). For Protestants the relative lack of importance accorded to solifidianism was a fissure at the centre of Catholic doctrine and they constantly used scripturalism in their martyrological texts as a lever to widen and expose this fracture, this corruption, in the Catholic structure. Thus, having already displaced the episcopal authorities' assumed claim to be purging the church of an heretic, the narrative of Coverdale's *Confutacion* was poised to preach protestant doctrine. '[N]o worke of man' stated Barnes, 'dyd deserue any thing of god but onely his passion as touching our iustificacion'.[71] 'Wherefore', he added, 'I trust in no good worke that euer I dyd but onely the death of Jesus Christ'.[72] Barnes' kerygmatic assertions, uttered at the time of his execution, demonstrate how martyrs and martyrologists used liminal confrontations with the episcopacy, as proxies for the celebration of scriptural narratives that their exclusion from the pulpits had denied them. These texts offered their readers an opportunity to contemplate the ideas that, under different circumstances, could have been propagated during any service in a Protestant church. The execution of Barnes - the destruction of his body by the episcopal powers - functioned as a lens. It

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71 Coverdale, *A confutacion*, sig. F.vii.[r].

72 Coverdale, *A confutacion*, sig. H.iiii.[v].

focused, for the reader, on the centrality of Jesus' Passion to Protestant belief - on the notion that this was a proclamation of Jesus Christ as God's eschatological act of salvation.

Barnes enlarged on his solifidian tenets when he said:

> Take me not here that I speake agaynst good workes. For they are to be done: and surely they that do them not shall neuer come to the kyngdome of god. We must do them because they are commaunded us of god to shew and set forth our profession not to deserue or merite for that is onely the death of Christ.[73]

Barnes' assertion of the centrality of the Christian kerigma to Protestant piety offered to the reader a clear exposition of New Testament teaching. While, on the one hand, this text established Barnes as a martyr to the true church through anagogical equation of his biography with that of Jesus in the Gospel narratives, it also functioned as an educated preacher at a time when, as the Protestant apologists so often reiterated, the English church lacked an adequate number.[74]

Barnes' execution offered the opportunity for another anti-episcopal martyrological narrative in the anonymous short dialogue poem *The metynge of Doctor Barons and doctor Powell at Paradise gate,*[75] which was published in 1548. This poem drew attention to the classic example of equivocation in policy during the Henrician Reformation when a Catholic (Powell) and a Protestant (Barnes) were 'quartered for popery' and 'burned for heresye'[76] respectively on the same day. But, what is more important, is, like all other Protestant

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73 Coverdale, *A confutacion*, sig. H.viii.[r-v].

74 As an example of the inadequacy of the Tudor clergy to work as ministers see the results of the Edwardian bishop John Hooper's visitation of Gloucester diocese in 1551 in John Hooper, *Later Writings*, ed. by Charles Nevison (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1852), pp.140ff. Of 311 parish clergy that Hooper examined only 79 (25%) were found to have sufficient knowledge of the scripture. 39 of those examined did not know where to find the Lord's Prayer in the Bible; 34 did not know the author of the Lord's Prayer and 10 were not able to recite it; 33 did not know where the Ten Commandments could be found in the Bible and 9 did not even know of their existence.

75 [Anon], *The metynge of Doctor Barons and doctor Powell at Paradise gate · of theyr communicacion bothe drawen to Smithfylde from the Towar. The one burned for heresye as the papistes do saye truly and the other quartered for popery and all within one houre.* (London: Wylliam Hill, 1548).

76 [Anon], *The metynge*, titlepage.

martyrological writing, this poem operated on an anagogical as well as a literal level and drew on other martyrological propaganda techniques to effect its meaning. Although *The metyng* was not a legal document like William Tracy's reprinted 'will' or a protestation from prison or the scaffold, it did claim to be the last known declaration of faith by Barnes. It is for this reason that I have included it here as a piece of last will and testament propaganda.

So, while this poem did not explicitly claim that Barnes' words were a true record of his last will or dying protestation of faith, as a posthumous account of a Protestant martyrs' defence of his piety against a Catholic opponent (Powell), it was an important martyrological piece. And, in fact, though the poem described itself as the 'metyng of Doctor Barons and doctor Powell at Paradise gate', there are several reasons why the situation of, and dialogue between, the interlocutors mimicked and recalled that last journey in this world that so many Protestants had already made from the prison cell to the execution stake.

In my discussion above of *An Epistle of the Ladye Iane,* I have already pointed out how John Banks portrayed her examiner John Feckenham - through implicit reference to the Gospel accounts of Jesus' trial and Passion - as an evil influence testing her faith and attempting to draw her away from her beliefs. In *The metyng,* Powell, like Feckenham, was a tempter. In fact, like all the bishops or episcopal officers who examined or, worse, followed the condemned Protestants to the stake with the intention of extorting a desperate recantation of their faith, Powell was a figure like the high priests in the Gospels, misguided and ultimately unsuccessful in their attempts to thwart divine revelation. Furthermore, because the author of this poem situated the

tempting of Barnes by Powell at 'Paradise gate', it is focused on a criticism of the morbid attempts at wresting last-minute abrogations and on the post-obit treatment of Protestants (Tracy being a case in point) by the authorities. The anonymous author of this poem suggested that, even after death, defenceless Protestants were hounded for their faith.

In answer to Powell's opening accusation that during his life Barnes strove against the holy mother church Barnes replied that in fact:

> In that my godly Jornye [of living according to the word of God]
> euer some popishe trayne
> out of a byshoppes brayne
> dyd turne me backe agayne
> cleane besyde the waye
> so for the verye trothe [...]
> [...] my dewtye coulde not doo[77]

Barnes' words here suggested that because of the persistent persecution by the bishops he was always thwarted in his attempts to follow the true church. It was specifically 'bishops' who were identified as the figures who maintained a corrupt religious practice: the 'byshoppes brayne[s]', the persecutory machinery they devised and practised, that followed 'popishe trayne[s]' (policy).

Once again, it was implicit reference to the Gospel narratives that lent greater force to the poem's argument and to its celebration of Barnes as a martyr. The constant endeavours of the 'byshoppes' to 'turne [Barnes] back agayne/ cleane besyde the waye' directed the reader to the various conspiracies of the high priests and the Sanhedrin, found in John's Gospel and the synoptic accounts, to thwart Jesus' ministry. This anagogic quality of *The metyng* performed the threefold function characteristic of all Protestant martyrological propaganda. By correllating Barnes' biographical details and the form of his death with those of Jesus, it provided reasonable scriptural arguments for the correctness, the truth, of Barnes' faith. It also directed the

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77 [Anon], *The metynge*, sig. A.ii.[r].

reader to the scriptures, to a remembrance of the record of Jesus' ministry and the Christian kerygma. And, thirdly, it directly equated the position and activities of Tudor bishops with the authority and self-interested, worldly, conspiratorial activities of the high priestly faction that effected the destruction of Jesus.

Because of the Christology inherent in *The metyng*, the bishops' indictment of heresy became a sign of the persecution of the true church. The character of Barnes maintained that he was not alone because there were many other martyrs languishing in prisons as a result of the cruel persecution of the bishops. His description of the methods of policing for the purposes of persecution were vivid:

> some they did make
> their goods to forsake
> some were exiled clene
> many they did spill
> bannyshe burne and kyll
> folowyng theyr wicked wyll
> lyke theues as they had bene
> some in the bishoppes chambere
> priuelye examined were
> because y^{e} people shuld not com nere
> to knowe what there was done
> wythe threteninges all to mainyd
> and fasinges sore blaimid
> to recante they were constrayned
> from thens or they were gone.[78]

Barnes' testimony described the indictments, the examinations, the forced recantations, and the burnings by the bishops. His 'priuelye examined' recalled the ominous presence chamber that Joye narrowly escaped as well as the numerous other descriptions of this examination process in the other types of reformist martyrologies. In 1548 the English church had been independent from Rome for 12 years. Despite the fact that Barnes' opponent Powell was described as a Catholic (an adherent to the authority of the Pope) and reference was made to the 'popishe trayne', this text was imbued not only with

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[78] [Anon], *The metynge*, sigs. A.iii.[r-v].

anti-papal sentiment but also with anti-episcopal views, and it used polemic against accusations of heresy, as part of its anti-episcopal martyrological account.

As early as 1535 Protestant apologists were constructing martyrological texts that concentrated on the conduct and words, during the last days of their life, of figures who had been mewed, manacled and condemned by a tyrannical episcopate. By the time the Marian policy of judicially murdering prominent or outspoken Protestant divines was underway in the mid-1550s, this type of writing and the scenes it described had become a crucial factor in the political struggles concerning piety and correct forms of worship. In *The Oxford Martyrs* David Loades points out that the attempts of government propagandists like John Christopherson and Miles Huggarde to shore up the authorities' bid to displace adherence to Protestantism was wholly ineffectual. What became so common during this period was a rather morbid altercation over the veracity of the victims' piety, which focused on the last days of imprisonment and the scenes of execution of the condemned figures. But the strength of the Catholic argument lacked the power of the martyrological writing - with its anagogy and anti-episcopacy - that had been developing for the previous 30 years. In *The displaying of the protestantes,*[79] Huggarde could only refer to the Protestant martyrologists - contemporary compilers and authors of last will and testament writing - as '[c]ursed speakers'. His argument did not go beyond this accusation of being seditious and attempting to undermine the authority of the Marian regime. Huggarde accused the martyrologists of:

> using their tongues after a most vile sort, not only against the church the spouse of Christ, but also against our princes ... And how abominable they have from time to time ill said of the kings majesty, reverence and shame constraineth silence.[80]

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79 Miles Huggarde, *The displaying of the protestantes* (London: Robert Caly, 1556).

80 Quoted from David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1992), p.159.

But, faced with a literature that fashioned figures condmned as heretics into the prophetic vessels of some form of godly disclosure, who - it must be remembered - were seen to suffer the agonies of the fire while operating in this prophetic capacity, simple accusations of sedition were not convincing.

In *The metyng* the Catholic opponent Powell had levelled a similar accusation to that of Huggarde at Barnes, in response to his (Barnes) description of the use of episcopal judicial apparatus for the persecution of Protestants:

> Fy Barons thou raylest
> it is not true thou faylest
> to lewdly thou faylest
> in thy communication
> tell some othe[r] tayle.[81]

But Barnes' character was not just ranting ('Fy Barons thou raylest') as Powell would have had it. Neither was he just speaking 'after a most vile sort' as Huggarde would have had it of other martyrs and martyrologists. The author of *The metyng* was drawing on a long tradition of martyrological fashioning, of texts which provided copious records and detailed accounts of the way in which episcopal policing machinery enthralled not heretics but preachers who, like Jesus before them, understood and wanted to make known God's words as revealed in the scriptures. 'It is your old pleying', says Barnes,

> that we do vse rayling
> the truth when we be sayeng
> against your noughty lyuing
> ye can not abyde
> youre wyckednes should be spyde
> or the truth should be tride
> ye be therat so byting.[82]

Because so much work had already been done by Protestant martyrologists on 'spying wickedness' (revealing illegal oppression and captivity by episcopal authorities) and 'trying the truth' (examining such claims and activities against

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81 [Anon], *The metynge*, sig. A.iii.[r].
82 [Anon], *The metynge*, sig. A.iii.[v].

Christian teaching in the Bible), unsubstantiated accusations of sedition were not a sufficient defence of the Catholic position. If they wanted to convince their readership that the limning of heretics as Protestant martyrs was sedition, writers like Huggarde were going to have to seriously address the detailed remapping, that had already been achieved by Protestant exegetes, of what episcopacy signified and entailed. They were also going to have to consider the rhetorical power that constant anagogical inscription - both as model (emulating Christ's conduct as a code for the true Christian to follow) and metaphor (directing readers to the Bible and judging episcopal/Protestant confrontations by it) - lent to the martyrological stance.

Early reform propagandists gradually fashioned a form of pamphlet that used the 'dying words' and testament preambles and obits of Protestants to undermine the authority of the English episcopate. Using discourses of martyrdom, anti-episcopal writers refined elements in anti-clerical writing concerned with the ecclesiastical judicial function into another specialised form. This was partly made possible by exploiting the recognised problem of the monopoly over probate by ecclesiastical courts, but also by the idea of collecting and printing - with martyrological commentary - certain Protestant wills. Early reform propaganda that exploited the form of a last will and testament shows a discursive practice akin to that which highlights and opposes the examination process. In both cases the discursive practice is designed as Protestant agitation against episcopal hierarchy and policing during the reformation of the English church.

Conclusion.

Conclusion

In 1541, at the beginning of the Catholic reactionary period of Henry VIII's reign, a royal proclamation was released that reinstated certain Feast Days but abolished the common festivities celebrated on others. It was 'devised by the Kings Majesty, by the advyse of his highness counsel, the xxi day of Julie, xxxiii Hen. Viii., commanding the feasts of Saint Luke, Saint Mark, Saint Mary Magdalene, Inuention of the Crosse, and Saint Lawrence, which had been vsed, should be nowe againe celebrated and kept holie days.'[1] In addition to this it stipulated:

> Whereas heretofore dyvers and many superstitious and chyldysh obseruances have been vsed, and yet to this day are observed and kept, in many and sundry parts of this realm, as vpon Saint Nicholas, Saint Catherine, Saint Clement, the Holy Innocents, and such like, children be strangelie decked and aparayled to counterfeit priestes, bishoppes, and women, and so be ledde with songes and daunces from house to house, blessing the people and gatherynge of money; and boyes do singe masse and preache in the pulpitt, with svche other vnfittinge and inconuenient vsages, rather to the derysyon than any true glory of God, or honor of his sayntes: The Kynges Maiestie therefore, myndinge nothinge so moche as to aduance the true glory of God without vaine superstition, wylleth and commandeth that from henceforth all svch superstitious obseruations be left and clerely extinguished throwout his realmes and dominions, for asmvch as the same doth resemble rather the vnlawfull superstition of gentilitie, than the pure and sincere religion of Christe'.[2]

The feast of the Holy Innocents, falling on 28 December, was a memorial to the infants of Bethlehem slain by the command of Herod in his attempt to extinguish Christ. Likewise, the saint days of Nicholas Bishop of Myra (c.342) on December 6, Catherine of Siena (1380) on April 29, and Clement Bishop of Rome (c.100) on November 23 all celebrated, to varying degrees, the protection of children in memory of the actions of these saints. The 'chyldysh obseruances' when 'children be strangelie decked ... to counterfeit priestes,

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1 Quoted from John Gough Nichols (ed.), *Two Sermons Preached by the Boy Bishop at St Paul's, Temp. Henry VIII, [sic] and at Gloucester, Temp. Mary*, intro. by Edward Rimbault, The Camden Miscellany VII (London: Camden Society, 1875), 'Introduction', p.xx.

2 See *A Proclamation deuysed by the Kynges Maiesty* ([London]: Thomas Berthelet, July 1541) and *A Bibliography of Royal Proclamations of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns... 1485-1714*, intro. by Robert Steele, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), I, p.21.

bishoppes, and women' to which the proclamation referred were customary festivals often observed on these days (but most usually on Saint Nicholas or Holy Innocents), and referred to as the 'episcopus puerorum' (episcopate of the boys).

The custom involved the election by his peers of one of the young choristers of the cathedral chapters to that of 'boy bishop', who assumed the office for a month or sometimes a year afterwards. To mark his inauguration as the newly installed bishop the chorister would often give a special sermon on the theme of 'innocents' and during his tenure he had to perform a mock visitation, upon which he and his entourage were often entertained at dinner by local nobility. One of the chief purposes of the visitation was to raise money.[3] As carnival, the boy bishop ceremonies were similar to the more well-known 'Feast of Fools', a New Year's festivity, in which lay parishioners elected among themselves a Pope and cardinals and, over several days, mock-performed various rites of the church amid general heavy drinking and eating. Often for the Feast of Fools a choirboy was elected as bishop, and the mass was burlesqued while an ass was led around the church. So the correspondences between this and the Episcopus Puerorum can clearly be seen - both contained a caricature of specifically episcopal imagery. The chronological proximity of these two carnival forms (in the case of the day of the Holy Innocents), 28 December and 1 January, may also explain the occasional merging of elements between the two. It has been observed[4] that, while in many ways it disregarded the esteem in which high office holders in the church expected to be regarded, such carnivalesque treatment of the medieval and early modern church

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[3] For details of the carnival of the 'episcopus puerorum' see Nichols (ed.), *Two Sermons*, 'Introduction'.

[4] For a recent discussion of this see 'The Reasons of Misrule', in Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Gloucester: Duckworth, 1975), pp.97-123.

ultimately served to reinforce the position of the Church and its hierarchy by allowing a brief period when parishioners' antipathies could be outwardly expressed.[5] While forms of carnival could serve to encourage values of community, they could also criticise the political order and offer an analysis of the institutions of king and state. The history of such carnival representations of the church liturgy and hierarchy as the Feast of Fools and the Episcopus Puerorum shows a strained relationship between their organisers and the authorities, but it appears that it was either too difficult or considered unwise to abolish them. In 1274 the Council of Nice had prohibited the boy bishop ceremonies, but it had clearly survived in certain areas of England. Thus these carnivals persisted in European towns and villages up to the Reformation, but in 1541 the prohibition of the Episcopus Puerorum was deemed necessary in England.

The proclamation prohibiting the practices of the choristers of the cathedral chapters on the feast of St Nicholas or the Holy Innocents shows yet another anxiety about the popular conception of the episcopal office in this period. I suggest that, in the intellectual climate of the Reformation, when so many authors like Tyndale, Barnes, Bale, Turner, Philpot and Joye were attacking the corruptions of Tudor episcopacy, carnival treatment of this office had become too politically charged to be countenanced. In her studies of popular culture in France,[6] Natalie Zemon Davis has already observed that the criticism of the church hierarchy inherent in popular carnival - often indulged by

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[5] On the social consequences of medieval carnival see M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968) which offers a detailed and sophisticated account claiming that the comic realm of Misrule was *equal* to the serious in this period and that it was the primary source of liberation that could lead to a change in society.

[6] See, for example: Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Gloucester: Duckworth, 1975), especially: 'The Reasons of Misrule', pp.97-123, 'Printing and the People', pp.189-227; and 'Strikes and Salvation at Lyons', pp.1-16.

the European church up to the sixteenth century - became more dangerous to the Church when it coincided with the topicality of the Protestant Reformation. Following a similar methodology to the anthropological historian Carlo Ginzburg,[7] in these studies Davis sets out to evaluate a variety of popular religious attitudes from the pamphlets, placards and books that were printed to address pietistic concerns in mid-sixteenth-century France, and the steps that the authorities took to enforce conformity. In particular Davis' article 'Strikes and Salvation at Lyons' shows how a carnivalesque group of printer's journeymen, known as the Company of Griffarins (Gluttons), experimented and sympathised with the new religious ideas because they were so much better suited to the independent lifestyle created by the nature of their relatively new trade. She traces the way in which, as a group, the Griffarins made popular protest to demand both religious and economic freedom, stipulating, however, that - under the Catholic jurisdiction of Lyons in place up to 1560 - the two aspects were not linked. But Davis shows that, in contrast to their Catholic predecessors, the Protestant Consistories that governed the town in the 1560s noted how the piety of the Griffarins may have fuelled their strike activities. It was for this reason, says Davis, that the Protestant authorities were unable to approbate the Griffarins' activities. Strangely, this led the journeymen back to the Catholic church, which had previously seemed anomalous to the lifestyle that their new trade of printing had created, because it was clearly better able to sustain their Saturnalian protests. Through an examination of the carnivalesque youth Abbeys (young, neighbourhood societies formed through

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[7] In, for example, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), and *The Night Battles* trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). On such a methodology see also Ottavia Niccoli, *Prophecy and People in Renaissance Italy*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

common work interests) of French towns in the middle part of the sixteenth century,[8] Davis draws similar conclusions that the ideology of Protestant rule was less able to sustain carnival activity than the Catholic church.

A similar clash of ideologies obtained in England with regard to the Episcopus Puerorum and the Henrician Reformation in the early 1540s. In this case the Episcopus Puerorum fused with contemporary Protestant anti-episcopacy, and so created a festivity that, in exteriorising the episcopal polity, questioned the authority of contemporary bishops' jurisdiction. While the English church in 1541 could by no means be called Protestant, it was independent from the Roman Church and, all the time that justification for such separation had to be given, a *defense* of episcopal jurisdiction also had to be maintained because the latter was essentially still part of the Catholic system. For critics of the unreformed Tudor episcopate, in 1541 there was an inconsistency in the form of the official English church, and bishops were the site on which this antinomy turned.

The prohibition of the Episcopus Puerorum of 1541, rather than being an accommodation of the Protestant reaction against the worship of saints, was a defensive move designed to protect episcopal rule. I have already pointed out that many of the economic grievances against the clergy can be traced to the episcopal coffers, and that this fact would provide an attentive audience for anti-episcopal propagandists, who happened also to be Protestant. This being the case, the mock-visitation of the boy bishop to collect yet more money for no apparent reason other than to finance the revels of the elite residents of the cathedral chapter would certainly have added fuel to any nascent anti-episcopal sentiment. It would have served as a symbol of the episcopal extortion that

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[8] In her article 'The Reasons of Misrule', in Davis, *Society and Culture*, pp.97-123.

Protestant propagandists had so clearly laid before their public. This also explains the curious juxtaposition of the reinstatement and prohibition of saint days and activities within the same proclamation.

This supposition about possible negative public attitudes to the boy bishop charivari derives some support from an account given by Foxe in the *Actes and Monumentes.* 'A godly matrone, named Gertrude Crockhay', he noted,

> the wife of maistre Robert Crockehay, dwelling then at Saint Catharins by the Tower of London abstained herself from the Popish church. She being in here husband's house, [...] the foolish Popish Saint Nicholas went about the parish, which she understanding shut her doores against him, and would not suffer him to come within her house. The Doctor Mallet, hearing thereof (and being then maister of Saint Katherin's) the next day came to her with xx. at his taile, thinking belike to fray her, and asked why she would not the night before let in Saint Nicholas, and receive his blessing, &c. To whom she answered thus, 'Sir, I knowe no Saint Nicholas (said she) that came hither.' 'Yes (quoth Mallet), here was one that represented Saint Nicholas.' 'In deede, Sir (saide she), here was one that is my neighboures childe, but not Saint Nicholas, for Saint Nicholas is in heaven. I was afraide of the that came with him to have had my purse cutte by them, for I have heard of men robbed by Saint Nicholas' clearkes,' &c. So Mallet, perceiving that nothing could be gotten at her hands, went his way as he came, and she for that time so escaped.[9]

Gertrude Crockhay's assertion that others had been robbed by the visitation of Nicholas and his clerks, and her belief that this would also have been her fate, shows how such a custom provided apposite material for condemning the corruptions of episcopal visitatorial exactions. The provenance of Foxe's account is not important here since, true or false as the account may be (although there is no specific reason to doubt its veracity), it still shows how the boy Nicholas's (or the similar practice of the boy bishop's) visitation did not look good for the visitational claims of real bishops. The two references to the boy bishop ceremonies and its various mutations that I have given show different occasional concerns. Foxe wished to denunciate the frivolous practices of the Catholic church, while the Henrician proclamation showed some concern to

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[9] Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes* (1843-9), p.1941.

guard episcopal authority against attack as the storm of the Reformation battered the English church. But in both cases the issue rested upon episcopal authority and in particular upon the practice of visitation. Bishops were appointed by the crown. They also had a substantial landed interest and jurisdictional control in Tudor society. As such they were likely to be sympathetic to a conservative reformation of the church if any at all. While the bishops were an important and logical instrument for directing a reformation of the English church - being custodians that would not radically alter the existing social hierarchy - they were also an Achilles' heel for the conservative body politic. A great deal of evidence supports this. The preceding Chapters have shown how susceptible episcopal jurisdiction was to Protestant martyrological propaganda and indeed the discussion of the validity of the bishop's office was not confined to this area. The propaganda itself gained currency because the problem of episcopal leadership of the church was so fundamental to reformation politics.

But the fact that Foxe's martyrological work approached the topic of the Episcopus Puerorum as anti-Catholicism rather than anti-episcopacy raises another important point. It marks the difference between early Protestant propaganda - in which anti-episcopal martyrological discourses were forged - and the anti-Catholic apologetics of the English Protestant church as officially settled under Elizabeth from 1559. The *Actes and Monumentes* was given official sanction, went through many printings and often appeared as part of the book 'furniture' of churches along with the authorised Bible and Erasmus' *Paraphrases*[10]. But the Elizabethan Church had maintained an unreformed episcopate and had been altered, it might be said, in liturgy only. So what was

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10 See my 'Introduction'.

it that happened to the Protestant martyrological discourses that I have looked at, to make them acceptable as an official form of propaganda for an episcopally unreformed church, when their very creation was engendered by an apparent campaign to overhaul the authority and status of Tudor bishops? The answer to this lies partly in identifying a generic anti-episcopacy as distinct from occasional criticisms of the actions of individual bishops.[11] The former, earlier form, that appeared in the martyrological propaganda I have discussed, wholly opposed the very principle of temporal possessions and jurisdiction of Tudor bishops, based on the notion that primitive 'episcopi' were only respected counsellors on exclusively religious matters. I suggest that the later English pro-Protestant martyrology, such as that to be found in the *Actes and Monumentes* and some other literature after 1558, was stripped of this generic anti-episcopacy and concentrated largely on the major doctrinal and formal differences between Catholic and episcopal Protestant practice. Further investigations of the propaganda against the English church after 1558 would have to be done to bear this out, and would make an interesting comparative study.

This is not to say that anti-episcopal agitation and propaganda ceased after 1558. Indeed, throughout the reign of Elizabeth it was manifest in the numerous publications of the vestiarian dispute of the 1560s,[12] the Admonition

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[11] But see also Catharine Davies, and Jane Facey, 'A Reformation Dilemma: John Foxe and the Problem of Discipline', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39:1 (Jan. 1988), 37-65, which shows how Foxe in his *De censura, sive excommunicatione ecclesiastica, rectoque eius usu* (1551) advocated a specifically non-episcopal system of church government, and how his view of ecclesiastical polity changed to accommodate the official Elizabethan religious settlement.

[12] See, for example: Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Ein buch von merenvnd falschen Mitteldingen Darin fast der gantze handel von Mitteldingen ertleret wird, widder die schedliche Rotte der Adiaphoristen* (Magdeburg: Christian Rodinger, 1550); Robert Crowley, *A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell and Ministring garmentes of the popishe church* (London: Henry Denham,1566); [Anon], *An answere for the tyme, to the examination put in print, with out the authours name, pretending to mayntayne the aparrell prescribed against the declaration of the mynisters of London* [Rouen: Abel Clemens, 1566]; I. B., *The Fortress of Fathers, ernestlie defending the puritie of Religion, and Ceremonies, by the trew exposition of certaine places of Scripture: against such as wold bring in an*

Crisis which began in 1572[13] and the Marprelate Controversy[14] of the late 1580s and early 1590s; and in these legal or doctrinal arguments over episcopal power that continued to be such an important issue in national politics during the reign of Elizabeth I, there was often a substantial - although uncredited - reliance on the groundbreaking philological and rhetorical arguments of martyrs and martyrological propagandists such as William Tyndale, George Joye, Robert Barnes and others. For instance, in an exchange of letters in November 1588 between John Hammond and Sir Francis Knollys, a prominent opponent of archbishop John Whitgift's conservative episcopalian policies, Hammond wrote the following concerning two issues that Knollys had raised with him:

> First, whether the name of a bysshoppe, as of an office having superyorytie over many Churches, or over the pastors thereof, be knowne to the Holye Scryptures or not. Second, whether superyorytie commytted to a mynyster of the Worde and sacrements over many Churches and pastors be mayntenable [i.e. permissible] by the Worde of God, or not;[15]

and in partial answer to these, he continued,

> the name of bysshops importinge suche superyoritie is not to be founde in the Scryptures. For by the whole course thereof it appearethe that the names of *Episcopus* and *presbyter* imported one function, so as he that was a pastor or

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Abuse of idol stouff, and of thinges indifferent, and do appoinct th'aucthority of Princes and Prelates larger than the trueth is ([n.p., n.pub.], 1566); [Anon], *The mynd and exposition of that excellente learned man Martyn Bucer vppon these wordes of S. Mathew: Woo be to the wordle [sic] bycause of offences. Math. xviii. Faythfully translated in to Englishe, by a faythfull brother, with certayne obiections + answeres to the same* (Emden: [n.pub.], 1566); [Anthony Gilby], *To my louynge brethren that is troublyd abowt the popishe aparrell, two short and comfortable Epistels* ([London: n.pub, 1566]); [William Whittingham or Anthony Gilby], *To my faythfull Brethren now afflycted - to all those that vnfaynedly loue the Lorde Jesus, the Lorde guyde vs with his holy spret, that we maye always serue hym bothe in body and mynde in all synceryte to oure lyues ende* ([London: n.pub., 1566?]).

[13] See, for example: John Field and Thomas Wilcox, *An Admonition to the Parliament* (Wandsworth: [n.pub.], 1572); [Anon], *An Answer* (c.1572) [this was an answer to the sermon at Paul's Cross by Thomas Cooper, bishop of Lincoln who was requestedby Whitgift to preach this sermon in reply to the Field and Wilcox *Admonition* (1572)]; John Whitgift, *An Answere to a certen Libel intituled An Admonition to the Parliament, by Iohn Whitgifte, D. of Diuinitie* (1572); [Thomas Cartwright], *A Second Admonition to Parliament*; [Anon], *Certaine Articles collected ... by the Bishops out of ... an Admonition*; [Anon], *An Exhortation to the Byshops to deal Brotherly with their Brethren*; [Anon], *An Exhortation to the Bishops and their Clergie to answere a little booke that came forthe the last Parliament*; Thomas Cartwright, *Replye to an Answere made of Doctor Whitgift* (1573); John Whitgift, *Defense of the Answere* (1574); [Anon], *A Defense of the Ecclesiasticall Regiment in Englande, defaced by T. C. in his Replie agaynst D. Whitgifte* (London: Henry Bynneman for Humphrey Toy, 1574), [William Fulke,?], *An Examination [by W. Fulke?] of M. Doctor Whytgiftes Censures, contained in two tables, sett before his booke entituled, The Defence of the aunswer to the Admonition, ...* (1575), Thomas Cartwright, *The Second Replie* (1575); Thomas Cartwright, *The Rest of the Second Replie* (1577).

[14] See, for example, William Pierce (ed.), *The Marprelate Tracts 1588,1589* (London: James Clark & Co., 1911).

[15] *Calendar of Salisbury MSS.*, (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission), iii, p.367.

> elder was also byshoppe, and the bysshope in lyke sorte called elder, and therefore the name of *episcopus,* being no name of dystynction in offyce from the elder, could not importe superyoritie over elders.[16]

Francis Knollys, Treasurer to the Queen's Household, was very active in his duties on the Privy Council in opposing, in particular, archbishop John Whitgift and Richard Bancroft,[17] whose exercise of a draconian episcopal conservatism against presbyterian ministers Knollys considered to be undermining the Royal Supremacy. The questions, here noted by Hammond, of whether the term 'bysshoppe' designated the office of an ecclesiastical official with jurisdiction over 'many Churches' - or whether precedent for such practice could 'be knowne to the Holye Scryptures' were issues that had already been raised and publicised by, for example, Robert Barnes in his *Supplycatyon* (1531)[18] - as discussed in Chapter 3 above - and John Ponet's tranlation of Barnardine Ochino's *A Tragoedie* (1549). Ochino's criticism of the ineffective administration of their regions due to the unwieldy size of episcopal dioceses was implicit in his criticism of this aspect of the administrative structure in the Roman church. 'What knowelage can thys false wretche haue', he pointed out of Boniface VIII (who had attempted to bring so many regions under his more direct control during his papacy from 1294-1303),

> of the churches in Affryke? or of the churches in Asia, where he was neuer in al the dayes of his lyfe? but what talke I of Affrike + Asia? How canne he gouerne those churches that bee in Europe whose language for the most parte he vnderstandeth not? By the reason of the great distaunce of places, + varietie of the nacions and menne? Who euer sawe one Crane gyde all other Cranes in the worlde? Who euer sawe a shepard, whiche coulde alone feede all the shepe in the yearth? He were worthye prayse yf he coulde gouerne hys owne well though he were not a whit troubled with caringe for the rest.[19]

And the very clear philological argument, made by Hammond here in favour of the efficacy of presbyterian church government with reference to the terms

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16 *Calendar of Salisbury MSS.*, iii, p.367.

17 At this time Bancroft was Dean of Westminster and held several other lucrative and influential positions in the church. In 1597 he was conferred to the bishopric of London and in 1604 he succeeded Whitgift as archbishop of Canterbury. He played a major role in re-establishing episcopacy in Scotland.

18 On sig. F.iiii.^{r}.

19 Barnardine Ochino, *A Tragoedie* (London: Gwalter Lynne, 1549), sig. D.i.^{v}.

'Episcipus' and 'presbyter', is so close to George Joye's discussion of it in *The Letters* (1529),[20] William Tyndale's explanation of the same in *The practyse of Prelates* (1530)[21] and Barnardine Ochino's reiteration of it in *A Tragoedie* (1549)[22] that Hammond seems to have taken his theories directly from one or all of these texts.

Such claims of linguistic proofs and such arguments against certain practices employed in the contemporary episcopal administration were not new notions in 1588, but would appear to have drawn upon the earlier pioneering and incisive martyrology of such writers as Joye, Tyndale, Barnes and Ochino. Thus, when - at approximately the same time Hammond and Knollys were corresponding over this issue - Martin Marprelate launched his own public attack in print upon the Whitgiftian/Bancroftian notion of episcopal law as a *jus divinum*, it was no coincidence that this pseudonymous pamphleteer employed martyrological discourses in his work.[23] He too was drawing on the combination of doctrinal argument and martyrological creations in these earlier texts to make his attack on *jure divino* episcopacy effective.

W. D. J. Cargill Thompson's fascinating study charting the course of Sir Francis Knollys' persistent opposition to the imposition of *jure divino* episcopacy in England concurs with my argument that the issue of episcopal jurisdiction in England remained as a point of serious political altercation for many decades after 1558 - the rough date at which my study ends. 'Whereas at the beginning of the reign [of Elizabeth I]', Thompson observes,

> most Elizabethan churchmen had accepted St. Jerome's view that episcopacy was a purely human institution, which was not introduced into the Church until after the death of the Apostles, and that there was no essential difference between bishops and other ministers, after the outbreak of the Admonition

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20 On sig. A.viii.^{v}.

21 On sig. B.iii.^{r}.

22 On sigs. B.iiii.^{v} - C.i.^{r}.

23 See the discussion of Martin Marprelate's *A Countercuffe* at the beginning of Chapter 1 above.

> controversy a number of anti-puritan writers began to lay increasing emphasis on the historical antiquity of bishops and to claim that episcopacy rather than presbyterianism represented the traditional form of government used in the Church.[24]

I would suggest that for this very reason the various forms of anti-episcopal martyrology created by the early Tudor writers and martyrs that I have isolated in this thesis also remained as an important medium in this continued debate over the forms of episcopal rule; and I would also suggest that in fact there was not a hiatus at the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign, but that anti-episcopal martyrology continued to be created and conflicts between reforming and episcopal communities persisted.

As Cargill Thompson points out, after the early 1570s there came to be an increasing number of lengthy attacks on the anti-episcopal lobby and its literature, and this began in John Whitgift's *Answer to the Admonition* (1572) and his *Defence of the Answer* (1574).[25] During the 1580s many arguments were published ascribing historical antiquity to bishops while also claiming their ability to dispense Divine law. John Bridge's *Defence of the Government established in the Church of England for Ecclesiastical Matters* (1587)[26] is a major example of such work and in 1588 Richard Bancroft preached a sermon at St. Paul's Cross - later published[27] - further supporting these arguments. While Bancroft continued to celebrate scriptural evidence for, and the great efficacy of, *jure divino* episcopal authority in *Daungerous Positions and Proceedings* and *A Svrvay of the Pretended Holy Discipline* (both published in 1593 against an increasingly outspoken presbyterian lobby),[28] Hadrian de

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[24] W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, 'Sir Francis Knollys's Campaign Against the "Jure Divino" Theory of Episcopacy', in *Studies in the Reformation: Luther to Hooker*, ed. by C. W. Dugmore (London: Athlone Press, 1980), pp.94-130, 100.

[25] For the texts involved in this controversy see above.

[26] (London: John Windet for Thomas Chard,1587).

[27] Richard Bancroft, *A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse the 9. of Februarie, being the first Sunday in the Parleament, Anno. 1588* (London: Gregorie Seton, 1588).

[28] Richard Bancroft, *Daungerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practiced within this Iland of Brytaine, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbiteriall Discipline* (London: John

Saravia's *De Diversis Ministrorum Evangelii Gradibus* (1590) claimed that episcopacy had been instituted by Christ. So it was a powerful type of reformist writing that had to be maintained against such increasingly extreme conservative notions of the power invested in the episcopal office, and I have argued that these forms did exist, and that they borrowed heavily from doctrinal positions and martyrological discourses that had already been established by the authors and the texts that I have examined in this thesis.

I have shown that, from the 1520s, access to the scriptures, unmediated by the pulpit or any other channel prescribed by the official church, became increasingly common. This was promoted by several factors, including the Protestant emphasis on the importance of the Bible to the church militant, tri-lingual studies - and, stemming from this, the developed working knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek versions of the Bible that pre-dated the Vulgate -, the new conditions which pertained in the printer's workshop, and the increasing availability of printed vernacular Bibles that resulted in the greater prevalence of discussions over creedal veracity. All these factors quickened the consciousness of the lack of sound scriptural authority for the status, power and wealth of the Tudor episcopate. Exploiting this heightened awareness of the corrupt condition of the Church hierarchy, anti-episcopal martyrological propaganda was developed and used by Protestant reformers in order to probe and further expose these fissures that had appeared in the ideology of episcopacy. Books employed in this manner ventured deep into the policing procedures, punitive apparatus and judicial machinery that was employed in maintaining the position and authority of English bishops. Doctrinal arguments

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Wolfe, 1593; repub. Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1968); *A Survay of the Pretended Holy Discipline* (London: John Wolfe, 1593).

and accounts of episcopal surveillance networks, examination chambers and courts were encoded with a christological and soteriological narrative that denounced the position and authority of contemporary bishops, celebrated and promulgated Protestant creedal interpretations of the scriptures, and fashioned martyrs out of episcopally manacled or otherwise proscribed Protestants. Witnesses to the 'true church' (Protestant martyrs) were identified and portrayed in these books by using the anti-episcopal textual logic, in which the episcopal examination chamber, gaol or scaffold were not places where due punishment was meted out, but sites where the prevalence of epiphanic revelation and deiform prophecy was maximised and later made known through the theopneustically encoded MSS of the martyrs. Viewed in this way, the further study of martyrological and anti-episcopal writing post-1558 (including Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes*), which took account of the arguments and discourses already established by the earlier writers, could provide interesting results.

Because Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* has been the most widely studied example of sixteenth-century Protestant martyrological discursive practice, much of the earlier forging of discourses that in fact gave it so much of its rhetorical power has been ignored; and because this book has been viewed as marking the inception of martyrological writing, the important cultural (specifically relating to religion) and political interaction between bishops and reformers from the 1520's to the 1590s has been lost. This is what I have attempted to recapture in the preceding Chapters, and this is what I suggest reveals a continuity among reforming communities not only from 1520 to 1560 but probably from 1520 to as late as 1600.

The earlier forging of martyrological discourses was a reaction against the sixteenth-century corruptions that were said to be manifest in Catholic episcopal jurisdiction and power. Their formative role and anti-episcopal objective has been lost by the over-emphasis on the Marian-Bonnerite persecution, together with the notion of the exiles' production of the *Actes and Monumentes,* as a beginning of martyrological literature. A fresh look at the earlier formative anti-episcopal martyrology revitalises interaction between early English Protestants and the Church episcopate, which in turn provides a fund of material on Protestant piety as it fed into the writing practices of propagandists, as well as the policing apparatus that was used by the episcopate to thwart these. By approaching this form of writing as martyrological anti-episcopacy rather than bipolar examples of either partisan Protestant or Catholic pieces, what emerges is some indication of interaction between Protestant dissidents and the English State authority as manifested in episcopal rule. Martyrological writing was not just a personal expression of genuine piety or *agon:* it was specifically created to attack English bishops as the opportunity for the reform of the church arose.

Furthermore, anti-episcopal martyrology reveals the presence in the sixteenth century of a quite distinct form of writing and of a culture to which this writing belonged. Two recent anthologies of Renaissance verse[29] include a preliminary discussion of the criteria used in the selection of texts for such collections. Despite being compiled in the 1990s, both of the editors of these recent anthologies are compelled to distinguish the contents of their *florilegia* from the original *Oxford Book of Sixteenth Century Verse*, first published in

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[29] See David Norbrook, *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse, 1509-1659,* ed. by H. R. Woudhuysen (London: Penguin, 1993) and Emrys Jones, *The New Oxford Book of Sixteenth-Century Verse,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

1932 and edited by the nineteenth-century scholar E. K. Chambers. In the 'Introduction' to his *New Oxford Book of Sixteenth-Century Verse,* Emrys Jones tactfully and tractably remarks that Chambers' miscellany 'was an admirable volume and has often been reprinted'.[30] But, working, as he is, in a society on the verge of the third millennium, Jones is impelled to add that:

> Sixty years later, however, in a changed world - after the Second World War and a post-war social revolution, and after Modernism, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, and much else - the sixteenth century and its poetry have come to look rather different. And as Chambers's volume has receded further into the past, it has become more obviously not just a product but also an expression of its own time.[31]

In, it must be said, a much more comprehensive discussion of the implications of inclusion in previous Renaissance analecta, David Norbrook also sets out to define his own anthology in relation to Victorian and Edwardian collections. In his 'Preface' to *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse, 1509-1659,* Norbrook argues that E. K. Chambers' collection reflected the then ascendant Burckhardtian version of the Renaissance which:

> placed [...] emphasis on the courtly lyric, on Elizabethan sonnets and on the previously neglected work of 'cavalier' lyricists like Herrick and Lovelace: writers who seemed to be aspiring to a kind of 'pure' poetry.[32]

'The preference', adds Norbrook, 'was for what C. S. Lewis termed "golden" poetry, the courtly and pastoral verse of the high Elizabethan period - verse, as he put it, which celebrates "all that is naturally delightful"'.[33] The positioning of their new anthologies in relation to the omnibuses that resulted from nineteenth-century scholarship and 'taste' reveals a questioning by both Jones and Norbrook of the idea of the purity or essential identifying quality of the 'best' poetry and of its timelessness or a-historical nature.

This rethinking of the import of poetical textual production and the significance of this for subsequent readers is both more committedly and more

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30 Jones, *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxv.
31 Jones, *Sixteenth-Century Verse*, p.xxv.
32 Norbrook, *Renaissance Verse*, 'Preface', p.xxiii.
33 Norbrook, *Renaissance Verse*, 'Preface', p.xxiii.

effectively achieved in Norbrook's anthology. His lengthy 'Introduction', which convincingly argues for the part that Renaissance verse played in the social interaction of the period and, furthermore, his division of the anthology into sections that correspond to different areas of these social negotiations - 'The Public World', 'Friends, Patrons and the Good Life' and 'Church, State and Belief', for example - indicate a lively historical consciousness that sets it apart from Jones' collection. But it is curious that both Jones and Norbrook predominantly use nineteenth-century scholarship as points of reference to define the novelty of their own work on sixteenth-century verse in the 1990s, when, in almost any other field, such reference would be construed as an attack on impotent, inert figures of straw. This would therefore tend to suggest that much work still remains to be done on understanding sixteenth-century textual production, not simply in its historical context, but as a social act that played a significant part in political interaction. This is especially true if it is accepted that writing in the sixteenth-century was remarkably different, as a mode of expression, to writing today. My analysis of anti-episcopal martyrological writing in this thesis represents a small contribution to the growing field of work that concerns itself with attempting to understand the environment in which certain sixteenth-century texts were produced, and the political interplay in which they were involved. While the texts I have looked at may at first have appeared to come from a similar 'tradition' as that discussed in, for example, John King's *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (1982) or his *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (1990), it is quite clear that their context, their idiom, their mode of

expression and their social activity mark them out distinctly from other cultural discourses and groups of texts.

Pro-reform writing at the beginning of the English reformation employed a sophisticated form of scriptural allusion and drew on latent anti-clericalism, crystallising certain of its elements to produce a refined but more concentrated and pungent compound, in order to attack many aspects of the existing English church: such as its wealth, probate, chantries, episcopal lordship, purgatory, monasticism and preaching. Very swiftly such writing came to focus on episcopal rule of the English Church as the cause of its corruption. George Joye, William Tyndale, Robert Barnes, William Turner, John Bale, John Philpot, Miles Coverdale and others created, between 1525 and 1554 specifically anti-episcopal discourses of martyrdom as a critique of the English ecclesiastical polity. While scripturalism clearly remained a common feature used to effect such writing, it is important to identify the creation of these new anti-episcopal martyrological features in order to understand the intellectual foundations and objectives of much of the writing in which it appeared.

Convocation as an institution, and its individual members, were targeted in the pioneering properties of a writing that concentrated upon episcopal activities and jurisdictional machinery, like visitation, examination and probate in order to denigrate the contemporary church polity. The increasing importance of both visitation and probate to episcopal revenue and the vivid anagogical presentation of the episcopal examination chamber were all used by reformers to forge martyrological propaganda. Anti-episcopal martyrology was the newly-created intellectual current that underpinned all such writing, and gave it its power. Its identification helps to liberate books by such writers as William

Barlow, Robert Barnes, William Tyndale and George Joye from being merely sources of information about the 'Henrician Reformation', to show that they in fact lay important stylistic foundations for anti-episcopal martyrology.

But from 1554, upon the accession of the Catholic Mary I and then from 1558 under the episcopal Elizabethan Church Settlement, church reform propaganda turned its attention to Catholicism - to attacking the Catholic regime that Mary had set out to reinstate and to the English recusants who continued to besiege the Elizabethan church. By 1555 the flirtation with abolishing old-style episcopacy, that is so marked in the martyrological anti-episcopacy from 1525, had passed because the extent of English church reform had been set back considerably. Anti-episcopal martyrology was still being used in, for example, John Bale's *Vocacyon* (1553) and John Philpot's *Examinacion* (1556). But shortly afterwards propagandists came to accept Anglican episcopacy as a reasonable compromise in the face of a regenerated Catholicism. At this point the highly specialised styles of anti-episcopal martyrologies were supplanted; until, that is, they gained a new ascendancy in their use by the pseudonymous author of the Marprelate Tracts against the increasing episcopal power that was being established by John Whitgift and Richard Bancroft in the 1580s and 1590s.

Discussing the official measures made from 1529 to curb clerical abuses, Professor Elton says:

> it would be a mistake to think that the early Reformation settled these issues; nothing is more striking than the continued hostility to clerical pretensions and the continued dissatisfaction with the standards of the clergy. The complaints became almost a commonplace, repeated in barely changing terms down to the Civil War.[34]

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[34] In *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.330.

This is an apposite general point, and the substance of the heresy statute from 1529-1554 serves to illustrate this. But here I have dealt with the manifestation in literary and historical sources of an 'opposition to the clergy' from a much more specific and detailed perspective - that of the interaction of radical Protestant activities and episcopal jurisdiction. In 1529 Parliament had passed three acts that limited fees for probate, burial and mortuaries and legislated against pluralism and non-residence[35] - all of which I have shown to be direct or indirect sources of episcopal income. In 1532 Parliament also made a direct attack upon the independent powers of the episcopal courts in the 'Supplication against the Ordinaries' which resulted in their having to relinquish their legislative independence. All of the forms of martyrological literature that I have examined here attacked the very same jurisdictional powers and corruption in English episcopacy. As heresy statutes were passed, revoked, reinstated and modified over the course of the English Reformation, Protestant martyrological writers consistently denigrated English episcopal jurisdiction as being too powerful and as being corrupt. Although in 1532-3 the Commons managed to effect some limitation on the legislative and executive powers of English bishops, the autonomous jurisdictional power of ordinaries for policing pietistic practices was reinstated by the Act of Six Articles in 1539 when bishops were once again able to initiate actions against individuals for heresy without prior presentment by a lay jury. Despite the fact that royal policy wavered between reaction, conservatism and moderate reform from 1520-1558, as I have shown Protestant propagandist writers fashioned several powerful forms of martyrological literature that continually sought to undermine what it presented as the powerful persecutory machinery of the contemporary episcopal office.

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35 21 Henry VIII, cc.5, 6, 13.

But these early forms of martyrological propaganda were soon to be appropriated by official Protestant apologists who tempered the martyrological techniques into forms that allowed for the settlement of an episcopal Protestant church such as that eventually consolidated under Elizabeth. This process began during the reign of Mary, although it by no means eclipsed the earlier forms at this time.

The idiosyncrasy of anti-episcopal martyrologies once again highlights the vincula bonding literary artefacts to certain occasional contexts. It suggests also the pertinence of a critical methodology that takes account of a full range of relevant historical enquiry in the process of assessing how and why the text in question was a social act. In his short, incisive article entitled 'The *Canterbury Tales* and Fourteenth-Century Peasant Unrest',[36] John Simons assesses the possible inscription in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* of the social unrest that led up to the peasant's Revolt of 1381, and how certain of Chaucer's *fabliaux* tales were designed to intercede in this political arena. Simons points out that, in the wake of unprecedented demographic and economic upheaval, the 1351 Statute of Labourers and various successive reactionary statutes - mostly in the form of sumptuary laws - were attempts by the nobility to curb peasant demands for greater social equality. Taking into account his unique position as 'a civil servant, JP (prime targets for the 1381 rebels), MP, and poet',[37] Simons is able to conclude that, in writing the *Tales*, Chaucer reproduced this reactionary ideological position of the nobility that had been enacted through statute. 'The *Canterbury Tales* may thus be read', concludes Simons, 'as a mobilisation within the cultural discourse of the

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[36] John Simons, 'The *Canterbury Tales* and Fourteenth-Century Peasant Unrest', *Literature and History*, Second Series, 1:2 (Autumn, 1990), pp.4-12.

[37] Simons, 'Peasant Unrest', p.11.

nobility's battle with the peasantry in the juridical'.[38] But Simons' notion of textual production as a social act that intervenes in a certain way in a concrete political situation, germanely makes some allowance for the separation of the fields of politics and culture. 'If culture is never the cutting edge of politics', he adds, 'we should remember that it may validate the use of a very real blade'.[39] The Protestant anti-episcopal martyrological texts I have examined in this thesis were tied to the political field in quite a different way to that of Chaucer's *fabliaux* tales. Designed as part of the Protestant insurgence against the dominance of episcopal status and power in a reforming English church, these texts were a powerful rearguard tactic that prised open the judicial bulwark of the Tudor episcopate and blunted that blade (or, in this case, smothered the flames) used to anathematise and hereticate opponents of conservative episcopal lordship.

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38 Simons, 'Peasant Unrest', p.11.

39 Simons, 'Peasant Unrest', p.11.

Appendices

Appendix I: Charts showing the relative importance of spiritualities and temporalities to the income for the English episcopal Sees.
Data Sources: Robert Swanson and Felicity Heal

Fig.1: Pie chart showing % share of spiritualities in gross income for episcopal sees
1535: The year of the Valor Ecclesiasticus

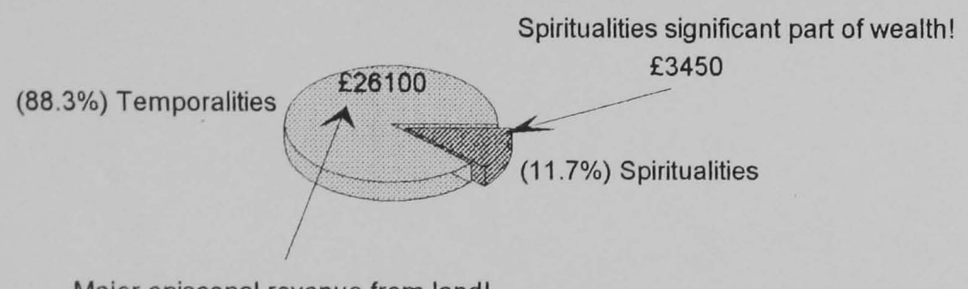


Fig.2: Pie chart showing % share of spiritualities in gross income of episcopal sees
1547: The end of the reign of Henry VIII

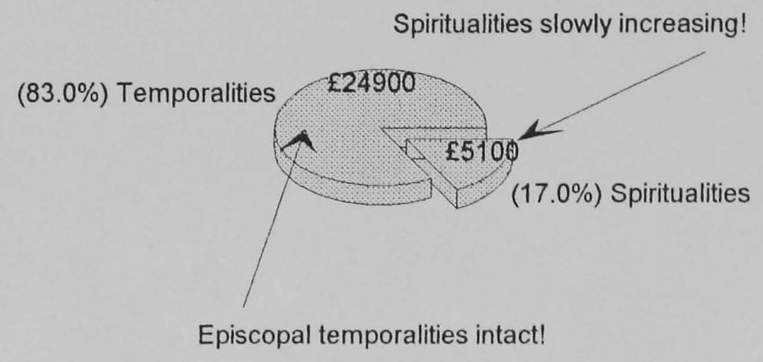
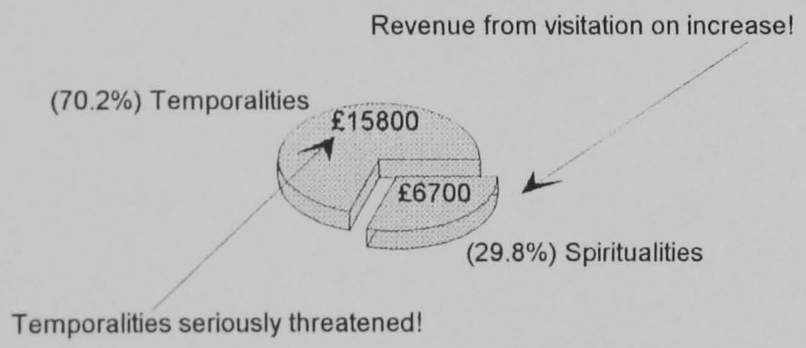
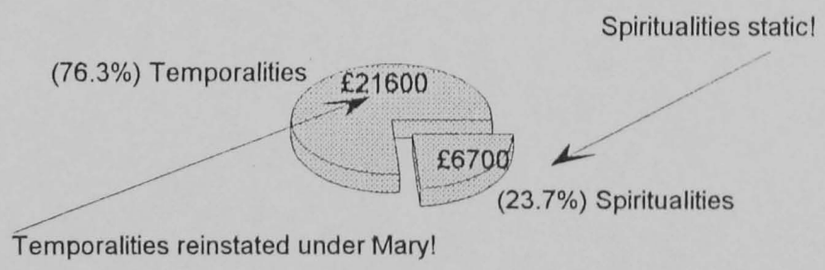


Fig.3: Pie chart showing % share of spiritualities in gross income of episcopal sees
1553: The end of the reign of the Edward VI



Note how the share is increased in real terms but also because temporalities have been significantly reduced.

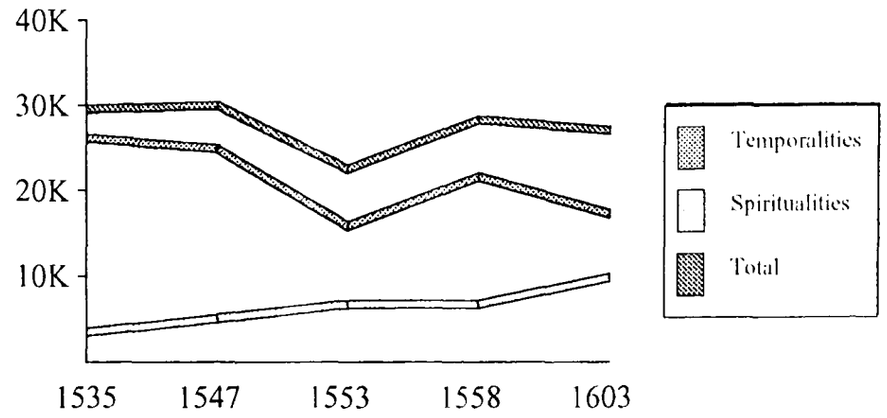
Fig.4: Pie chart showing % share of spiritualities in gross income of episcopal sees
1558: The end of the reign of Mary I



Note how, while the real income from spiritualities has remained at its increased 1553 level, the income from temporalities has shot back up.

Appendix II: Episcopal income from rent and spiritualities

Estimates of the annual rental and spiritual income of episcopal sees in England and Wales, 1535-1603



Year	Temporalities (£)	Spiritualities (£)	Total (£)
a.1535	26,100	3,450	29,550
a.1547 (Jan)	24,900	5,100	30,000
a.1553 (Jul)	15,800	6,700	22,500
a.1558 (Nov)	21,600	6,700	28,300
a. 1603 (Mar)	17,200	9,800	27,000

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